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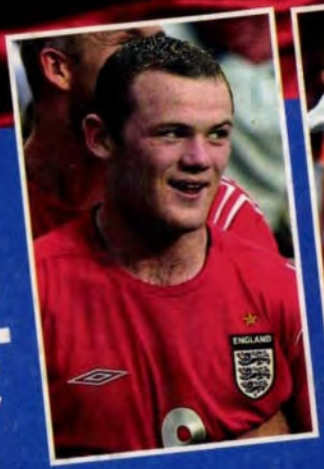

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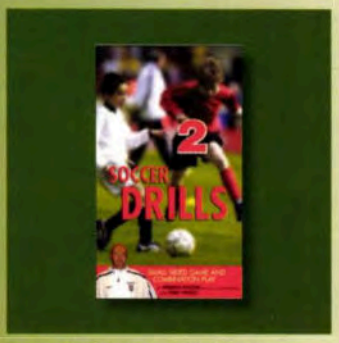

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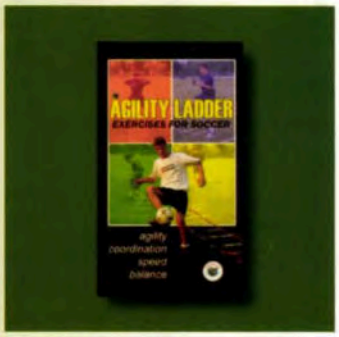

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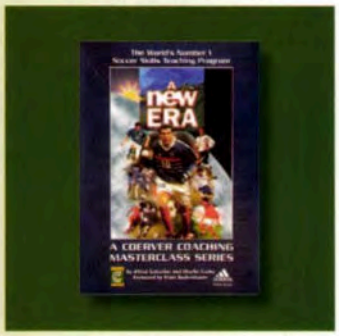

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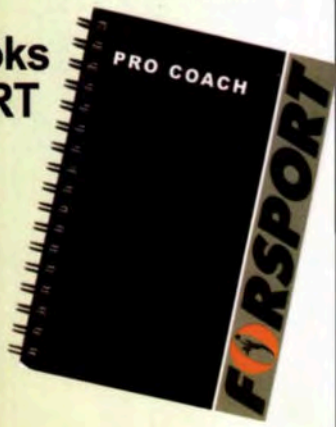

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AUGUST 2004

WORLD SOCCER comment

GREECE, who'd have thought it? Well, only Rudi Voller, Giovanni Trapattoni and Kobi Kuhn, when asked in the July edition of *World Soccer* to predict a surprise team of the tournament. But enough of our trumpet-blowing. It's time to reflect on Portugal 2004 before a new season descends upon us.

First and foremost, it has to be recorded that Euro 2004 was not a great tournament in pure football terms, certainly nothing to compare with four years ago. There were some fast and furious games, and teams who tried to defend a one-goal lead (Italy, England) got punished. But it was one of the most negative teams in the finals (only Latvia had less attacking ambition than Greece) who triumphed at the end.

Much has, and will, be made of the failure of the 'Big Five' in Portugal. But as we report on page 34 there is no single reason for their early departures. Nor is there one explanation for the rise of smaller nations such as Greece and the Czech Republic. The Czechs already had a strong tournament pedigree, while Otto Rehhagel's Greek side will be remembered in decades to come for what they were: astonishing, against-all-odds, lightning-strikes-once giantkillers.

If there was a discernible trend from Euro 2004 it was the rise of teenage talent at the expense of the established superstars. None of the big names delivered in Portugal. Were they tired after another exhausting season or just unemotional about performing for their countries when it is their clubs who fund their filmstar lifestyles? It was probably a little bit of both. That mattered little to youngsters like Cristiano Ronaldo and Wayne Rooney, who emerged as the true personalities of the tournament, playing some wonderful, fearless football.

It is not just a trend confined to Europe. As our cover feature (page 12) illustrates, Americans are pinning their hopes on 15-year-old Freddy Adu. In South America, youngsters like Diego are already feted as heroes when they win and pilloried when they lose.

Rooney's best years still lie ahead of him, but it's hard to escape the feeling that he is being badly advised off the pitch. England has a new national hero, a hero who spent the weeks before Euro 2004 giving interviews only to those publications who were prepared to plug a particular fizzy drink and a certain brand of crisps, a result of endorsement deals arranged by Rooney's eager agents. And we wonder why we are nurturing a generation of obese children.

Gavin Hamilton, Editor (gavin_hamilton@ipcmedia.com)

*** SAVE MONEY ON WORLD SOCCER SEE OUR SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTION OFFER ON PAGE 68

contents

AUGUST 2004 VOL 44 NO 12

Alex Ferguson, p32

62 Semi-final: Portugal v Holland
64 Semi-final: Greece v Czech Rep
66 Squads

COVER FEATURE

12 Spotlight on the 50 most exciting teenagers in world football

REGULARS

8 Brian Glanville
10 Paul Gardner
78 World Service

HEADLINERS

People making the news

6 Otto Rehhagel
7 Milan Baros

EURO 2004 REVIEW

20 The Final
24 The view from Greece
26 Keir Radnedge A-Z
30 Team of the tournament
32 Sir Alex Ferguson
34 The view from the Big Five: Italy, Germany, France, Spain, England
38 Group A
42 Group B
46 Group C
50 Group D
54 Quarter-final: Portugal v England
56 Quarter-final: France v Greece
58 Quarter-final: Sweden v Holland
60 Quarter-final: Czech Rep v Denmark

Asian Cup, p74

DIGEST

News and reports from around the world

70 Libertadores Cup Final
74 Asian Cup preview

ONCE CALDAS ORGANISE SURPRISE

Colombia's Once Caldas were the surprise winners of the 2004 Libertadores Cup, beating favourites Boca Juniors of Argentina on penalties in the Final. **Page 70**

Positive negative

GREECE V CZECH REP SEMI-FINAL: The Greeks got the result they wanted after defending to the death in Porto. **Page 64**

Figo crosses Final frontier

PORTUGAL V HOLLAND SEMI-FINAL: The veteran of Portugal's 1991 World Youth Cup success finally won a shot at senior success. **Page 62**

Euro 2004: Greece win it with graft

Greece, the 80-1 outsiders who had never previously won a game at a major tournament, stunned the world with their victories over Portugal (twice), France and the Czech Republic to win the 2004 European Championship.

Hosts change for the better

EURO 2004 GROUP A: Portugal recovered from an Opening Match defeat to reach the quarter-finals after beating Spain in their final group game in Lisbon. **Page 38**

France first but Rooney roars

EURO 2004 GROUP B: Defending champions France came through as group winners, but England teenager Wayne Rooney was the star of the show. **Page 42**

Italy fall with fixed ideas

EURO 2004 GROUP C: Sweden and Denmark drew 2-2 in their final group match to condemn Italy to a first-round exit, amid ludicrous claims of conspiracy. **Page 46**

Comeback kings

EURO 2004 GROUP D: The Czech Republic went behind in each of their three group games, but recovered to become the only team in the finals to finish the group stage with a 100 per cent record. **Page 50**

ASIAN CUP

The Asian Cup kicks off in China on July 17. Michael Church previews the expanded tournament. **Page 74**

Ricardo outshines big-time Charlies

PORTUGAL V ENGLAND QUARTER-FINAL: The unsung Portuguese keeper was the surprise star as Beckham and Figo fluffed their lines. **Page 54**

Milan the man

CZECH REP V DENMARK QUARTER-FINAL: Baros starred as the Czechs put Denmark to the sword in Porto. **Page 60**

Dutch beat shoot-out jinx

SWEDEN V HOLLAND QUARTER-FINAL: Dick Advocaat's men held their nerve to beat the Swedes in a penalty drama in Faro. **Page 58**

France crash in cul-de-sac

FRANCE V GREECE QUARTER-FINAL: The heroes of the 1998 World Cup and Euro 2000 reached the end of the road when they came up against a spirited Greece side. **Page 56**

After the hype, the tournament: Euro 2004's opening ceremony is held in Porto's Dragao stadium

12/06/04

Substitute Juan Carlos Valeron hits Spain's winner against Russia

12/06/04

Zinedine Zidane converts the stoppage-time penalty as France beat England 2-1 in Lisbon

13/06/04

Croatia and Switzerland play out a goalless draw in Leiria

13/06/04

HEADLINERS

OTTO REHHAGEL

Made in Germany, worshipped in Greece, hailed across Europe, but...

'His detractors view him as a coaching dinosaur, using antiquated training methods from a 1960s manual'

OTTO REHHAGEL might be Greece's man of the moment after taking a team of supposed no-hopers to the European summit and would surely win in a canter if he took the advice of a Hellenic talk show host and stood for president. Yet back in his native Germany, the 65-year-old is not nearly so electable.

Despite a wonderful track record in German club football – he steered Werder Bremen to two domestic titles (1988 and 1993) and the 1992 European Cup-winners Cup and pulled off the unique achievement of leading Kaiserslautern to Second Division and Bundesliga titles in successive seasons (1997 and 1998) – Rehhagel has always been a figure to polarise opinions, one to draw acclaim and enmity in equal measure.

Admirers point to the highly competitive teams he built on a shoestring at Werder and Kaiserslautern, his tactical acumen, flawless defensive organisation and ability to wring every ounce of effort from his charges. For the pro-Rehhagel camp, he would make a fine boss of the German national team, his recent exploits with Greece just another illustration of his flair for producing sides worth much more than the sum of their parts.

Give him a group of veterans who are allegedly over the hill and a sprinkling of hungry young things, say his acolytes, and he can work miracles. "We have no stars; the team is the star," was his constant refrain during 14 years at the Werder helm, and the mantra continues to hold true today.

However, his detractors see 'King Otto' from a different perspective. They view him as a coaching dinosaur, a yesterday man steeped in old-style Italian *catenaccio*, the rigid playing of percentages and antiquated training methods dating from a 1960s manual. A widely-held view in Germany is that his style of leadership only works with journeymen and fresh-faced kids whom he can mould through sheer force of personality. No doubt his unhappy eight- month spell in charge of the numerous egos at Bayern Munich in the 1995-96 season will be called as exhibit A.

His authoritarian ways – what he terms "democratic dictatorship" – stolid training ground rituals and constant changing of personnel were not at all to the liking of stars such as Lothar Matthaus, Jurgen Klinsmann, Thomas Helmer et al. With rebellion gripping the dressing-room, president Franz Beckenbauer felt compelled to sack Rehhagel, even though Bayern were second in the Bundesliga and through to the Final of the UEFA Cup.

Bayern general manager Uli Hoeness tried to sugar the pill, saying: "Mr Rehhagel is a world-class coach but wasn't suited to a world-class team." But there was no disguising the lowest point of Rehhagel's coaching career.

The Bayern barons hated the former house painter's colour schemes, and the German media could gleefully portray him as the provincial hick who could not cut it in the big league. Friends say it still rankles with him today.

Rehhagel, a miner's son from the Ruhr, is at times his own worst enemy. He can give the impression he invented tactics, his "I'm always right" routine can infuriate and he is, in many ways, a loose cannon, often close to careering off the road emotionally. Bombastic and theatrical, canny and meticulous, practical and successful, Otto Rehhagel is very much a one-off.

Nick Bidwell

Italy and Denmark draw 0-0 in Guimaraes in a game dominated by the two goalkeepers

14/06/04

Ruud Van Nistelrooy converts a half-chance to equalise for Holland against Germany in Porto

15/06/04

Wayne Rooney heads England's first goal against Switzerland in Coimbra; his team go on to win 3-0

17/06/04

MILAN BAROS

Euro top scorer with a point to prove at Anfield

MILAN BAROS is looking forward to making a new start at Liverpool after regaining his spirit and confidence with the Czech Republic under the fatherly guidance of Karel Bruckner.

Baros became the only player to score in all his first four games at Euro 2004 when he struck twice in three minutes in the second half against Denmark in the quarter-finals. The goals took his tournament tally to five, and he remained its leading marksman despite the semi-final defeat by Greece.

Those goals also helped Baros wipe away the memories of the problems he suffered last season. He broke an ankle in a League match against Blackburn Rovers last September and was not fit to return to duty for five months – he made his comeback in the FA Cup against Portsmouth.

Mission...Baros aims to take his Euro 2004 form back to Liverpool

But Baros struggled. Manager Gerard Houllier grew impatient and in the season's remaining three months used him in only eight Premiership matches, in which the Czech claimed only one goal.

Baros was so upset he stopped worrying about English football and decided to concentrate all his efforts on Euro 2004.

He says: "It was a difficult time for me. Houllier destroyed my confidence. I was not being picked so I even thought it might be best to leave Liverpool. I thought I had no future there.

"That was confusing because Houllier had signed me. I thought he would have more faith in me and give me more time to get fit. But, of course, he was under pressure himself.

"Now we have a new coach in Rafa Benitez the situation has changed. We all start anew next season with equal opportunities. That is all I ever wanted.

"People said I play differently for my country but that's not true. I play exactly the same at Liverpool. All I can hope is to transfer this form from country to club. I'm sure I can. I want to stay at Anfield and be a part of whatever happens next."

Baros faces competition. Michael Owen has extended his contract for a further two years and French striker Djibril Cisse has arrived for £14million.

But Baros has his feet on the ground. While delighted with his goals in Portugal, they represented only a qualified success. He says: "To score is always important for a striker but what was even more important was that they helped the Czech squad do so well.

"We had great team spirit so those weeks were important for me as both a player and as a person."

Keir Radnedge

EURO 2004 TOP SCORERS

Milan BAROS (Czech Republic) 5

Wayne ROONEY (England) 4

Ruud VAN NISTELROOY (Holland) 4

Angelos HARISTEAS (Greece) 3

Frank LAMPARD (England) 3

Henrik LARSSON (Sweden) 3

Jon Dahl TOMASSON (Denmark) 3

Zinedine ZIDANE (France) 3

The lead-up to Sweden's late equaliser against Italy in Porto in their Group C match

18/06/04

Milan Baros celebrates the equaliser against Holland; the Czechs would eventually win 3-2

19/06/04

Latvia's players applaud their fans after the goalless draw with Germany in Porto

19/06/04

Portugal fans find their voices in their group game against Spain

20/06/04

WS WORLD SOCCER Brian Glanville

...on England's wingless woes...the match-turning injury to Wayne Rooney... the Czechs' fine tournament record...Italy and France's limp departures

POOR, PATHETIC David Beckham. Reportedly reduced to pulp in Portugal by his ferociously ambitious wife. If such reports are true, you do wonder why Sven Goran Eriksson ever countenanced the presence and proximity of the England players' wives.

That Beckham should miss not one but two penalties in the tournament was damning enough. That, given his previous couple of misses, he should have been given the first shoot-out penalty against Portugal amazed none other than Franz Beckenbauer.

But the England problem goes much deeper than that, goes back arguably to Alf Ramsey's wingless wonders of 1966. Alf always insisted he had nothing against wingers per se, but that the three he had in his squad hadn't done what he wanted.

So it was that Alan Ball, an inside-forward, played on the right, Martin Peters, a right-footed right-half, on the left. And it worked, not least because in the World Cup Final little Ball played a classical right-winger's game, running Karl-Heinz Schnellinger ragged. From that moment, however, wingers were on the wane in English football.

This European Championship has in fact proved that they are no luxury at all. The reinvigorated 32-year-old Karel Poborsky for the Czechs, Cristiano Ronaldo for Portugal, Arjen Robben for Holland, Jesper Gronkjaer for Denmark, Joaquin and Joseba Etxeberria for Spain all flourished. What they could do, as all true wingers can, is beat the full-back, get to the line and pull the ball back into the middle – a fact emphatically pointed out by a very true winger indeed, England's Chris Waddle.

In the coming season, it would be good to see a natural winger like Manchester City's young Shaun Wright-Phillips given the chance to see if he can do what Beckham can't. Had Eriksson had the initiative to put him on in Gothenburg in the friendly against Sweden at the end of March rather than keep him on the bench, perhaps we and he would know.

Eriksson, however, is in essence an unimaginative and inflexible manager who fails to think quickly in a game. Take, for example, the inert performance at the last World Cup against a Brazilian team reduced to 10 men for the last 33 minutes, when England didn't even get a shot on goal.

'It would be good to see a natural winger like Shaun Wright-Phillips given the chance to see if he can do what David Beckham can't'

It is useless for Eriksson to hide behind statistics, claiming that under his aegis England have lost only a handful of 'official' matches. But these, dear Sven Goran, have been the ones that mattered.

ERIKSSON should have known better than to join, however mutedly, the raucous clamour against Urs Meier for disallowing Sol Campbell's goal against Portugal.

Was it a goal? Some referees would probably have given it, others would have taken Meier's view that John Terry's flailing arm prevented keeper Ricardo from jumping.

The whole dingy affair reminded me of the Stab In The Back theory elaborated by the German General Staff after the Great War. Their army hadn't lost it; they had been betrayed by the politicians. In 1945, the policy of unconditional surrender put the kibosh on that.

What *did* play a decisive part in England's eventual defeat, albeit through the fiasco of penalties, was the wretched injury to Wayne Rooney. As Tony Gale, the former Fulham and West Ham centre-back, pointed out, Rooney not only scored dramatic goals, but he also played an essential part by dropping back to forage for the ball.

Perhaps more important still was the psychological effect the departure of the teenage forward had on both teams. It was a fearful blow to England, but a great relief to a Portuguese team no longer obliged to face the revelation of the tournament.

Zinedine Zidane heads France's opening goal against Switzerland in Coimbra

21/06/04

The scoreboard spells out first-round exit for Italy after Sweden and Denmark draw 2-2

22/06/04

Bernardo Corradi contemplates Italy's departure despite beating Bulgaria 2-1

22/06/04

THE Czechs continue to flourish in international competition, having previously reached the Final at two World Cups (1934 and 1962), won the European Championship in 1976 and finished runners-up in 1996.

The latest Czech team confirmed the reputation they brought to Portugal despite one or two disappointing results in recent friendlies. I saw them struggle at first against modest Latvia, a selfish error by the later star turn, Milan Baros, giving the ball away, leading to a sweeping pass by Igors Stepanovs and a swift counter-attack that put the Latvians in the lead.

The arrival of blond attacker Marek Heinz helped to turn the tide, Baros scored one of the Czech goals and was inexplicably named man of the match.

This was a title he far more clearly deserved after his glorious solo goal against the Germans after coming on as a substitute, and the two he snapped up so efficiently from inspired passes by Karel Poborsky and Pavel Nedved against the Danes.

Nedved was beyond doubt one of the most accomplished, energetic and influential players of the tournament. But what of Poborsky, so spry, quick and accomplished on the right wing, eight long years after his excellent displays at Euro 96? After that he joined Manchester United, where things went sadly wrong. Not until he returned to the Continent, playing for Benfica and Lazio, did things go right again. Ironically, it was the rise of David Beckham that hampered his career at Old Trafford. And now?

Meanwhile, elderly Czech Republic coach Karel Bruckner was amply justified in fielding what seemed a mere reserve team against Germany in the final group game. There were no such thing as reserves, he retorted. And indeed we saw not only Baros but also Heinz score superlative goals. Heinz's left-footed free-kick from the right into the near top corner was arguably the best goal of the tournament.

As for Germany, it was hard not to feel sympathy for departing coach Rudi Voller. Whoever succeeds him will still have the job of making bricks without straw. Who but attack-minded defender Philipp Lahm and the young blond Bastian Schweinsteiger gave much hope for the future? And the latter, like the splendidly precocious Johann Vonlanthen of Switzerland, was a very late addition to the squad.

ITALY? When Francesco Totti, who smashed up a dressing-room in South Korea after his team's exit from the last World Cup, spat his way out of this tournament the writing was on the wall.

The *Azzurri* very nearly lost their opening group game to Denmark, and were kept busy by a totally reanimated Bulgaria in the third match. But Italy so badly needed an Antognoni, a Rivera, a Mazzola to pull the strings.

They weren't a patch on Dino Zoff's resourceful team of four years ago, who reached the Final. Silvio Berlusconi did Italy no favours when he drove the competent, dignified coach out of office with his ill-natured and ill-informed criticisms after the tournament. Zoff's successor, Giovanni Trapattoni, was lucky to be in charge at all in Portugal after the 2002 World Cup fiasco.

France? So lucky against England and Croatia, so flaccid against the Greeks. How badly they needed Patrick Vieira that evening. And how easily Theo Zagorakis rounded Bixente Lizarazu to set up the winner.

Read Brian Glanville's weekly column at www.worldsoccer.com

Notes & quotes

"Rooney, Rooney, Rooney."
Barcelona president Joan Laporta gives a succinct answer when asked who Europe's coaches, general managers and chief executives were discussing.

"It's ridiculous to blame problems with our boots. In Kenya they can run 100 kilometres in bare feet."
Italy's Gennaro Gattuso after his side only drew with Denmark.

Booting out excuses...Gattuso

"This was not a war. That's an unfortunate word which sometimes slips into these discussions. The only war is in Iraq, where Portuguese soldiers are serving."
The host team's coach Luiz Felipe Scolari after their 1-0 defeat of Spain.

"Braga is a very dramatic stadium but it's not easy to find the goals. There are no fans behind them and the posts blend in with the rock, so we couldn't see them."
Coach Morten Olsen on Denmark's failure to score more than twice against Bulgaria.

Portugal keeper Ricardo converts the decisive spot-kick in the quarter-final shoot-out against England after a 2-2 draw in Lisbon

24/06/04

Thierry Henry reflects on his misses in the defeat by Greece

25/06/04

Holland and Sweden battle it out in Faro before taking their chances on penalties

26/06/04

Michael Reiziger challenges Cristiano Ronaldo in the first semi-final in Lisbon

30/06/04

WS WORLD SOCCER **Paul Gardner**

England against the world

The Premier League twists good international players out of all recognition

YOU WOULDN'T THINK it possible, but these guys pulled it off. I'm talking about the British commentators my US pay-per-view television channel inflicted on me. They managed to make a Euro 2004 game between the Czech Republic and Latvia sound like an English Premier League game.

All that mattered about the players, it seemed, was whether they played, had played, would play, wanted to play, or weren't good enough to play in the Premier League. The references to Chelsea, Manchester United, Arsenal, Liverpool – I think even Bristol Rovers got in there – just came gushing out.

And so it went on, for every game. The highlight came early, when one poor confused guy announced during the England-France game that "Arsenal are making a substitution".

Then at half-time we got the panel experts who, when you could understand what they were saying and when they'd stop killing themselves laughing at their own jokes, turned out to know everything. From a Premier League point of view, that is.

Overkill is, by definition, bound to be counter-productive, and in no time at all these commentators and panellists had made it very clear to me that, far from being the be-all and end-all of football, the Premier League is actually a monster blight upon the game. They didn't see the evidence, of course. Yet there it was, right under their noses at Euro 2004.

'Foreigners who can't adapt to the demands of the Premier League are trashed as worthless'

I'll start with France. Not that long ago, France had a glorious team, were World Cup winners, European champions and so on. But for the past two years they have performed pathetically.

What went wrong? Simply that far too many of the players moved to the Premier League – where they had to 'adapt'. This sort of thing, from Thierry Henry: "When you arrive in the Premier League you have to change your state of mind or you won't survive." Marcel Desailly has told us that English football "is too aggressive, to the point that I'm obliged to force myself to be bad. But it's the only solution if you don't want to be eaten up." While Christian Karembeu found the football "amateurish – it is as though teams are making things up as they go along all the time".

You get the message. So, after a year or two, the foreigners adapt. And when they're called back to the real world of football, the international game, they're lost. So, logically, English clubs don't win in Europe. And English players who try their luck abroad invariably flop.

Foreigners who can't adapt to the demands of Premier League coaches are trashed as worthless. Milan Baros? Hopeless. Helder Postiga? Useless. Juan Sebastian Veron? Forget it. Can't play, any of them. Juan Pablo Angel has stuck with it for four years, brave, foolish lad, and now seems to have adapted. Probably at the expense of his career with Colombia.

Worth considering, all of that. So Postiga helps eliminate England from Euro 2004, and Baros top-scores. How can that be? Who is out of step here? The Premier League or the entire rest of the world?

Real training or not...

David Beckham has had his say, too...about training methods. Seems they're not much good at Real Madrid, those training methods that have made the Spanish club the most successful in the world. Not as good as those at Manchester United, anyway, where David always felt fit, whereas his Spanish training has left him feeling tired.

And if anyone thought for a moment that foreign referees were up to Premier League standards, Urs Meier must have shattered that notion. I mean, whistling for a foul by John Terry for elbowing a goalkeeper in the throat while not going for the ball? That was a perfectly respectable goal by Premier League standards, Herr Meier.

There seems to be no possible meeting of minds here. England try to impose the Premier League way on the rest of the world, and that obviously doesn't work. So they pay a Swede a fortune to impose some of that clever foreign

Greece's remarkable story continues: the players celebrate reaching the Final after beating the Czech Republic 1-0 in Porto

01/07/04

Greece, the most unlikely winners in the history of the European Championship, celebrate their 1-0 Final victory over Portugal

04/07/04

Making a point...Helder Postiga, a flop at Tottenham, celebrates his goal for Portugal against England

stuff on the England players, and that doesn't work either.

Time to face up to the fact that English football, as the English never tire of telling everyone, really is something special, something incorrigibly different. A world in which even the world's best players have to learn how to play again. And then, when they have, they don't play like the world's best players any more.

Time for me to call my star witness. The Brazilian player. I mean your typical Brazilian player, the skilful, artful, creative, crowd-pleasing, goalscoring Brazilian ball artist. He's all over the globe, scoring goals and delighting fans in Italy, Spain, Portugal, Mexico, Holland, even in Germany, and, would you believe, Russia. Everywhere. But not in the Premier League.

Oh no, these fancy Brazilian powder-puffs can't cut it there. I know all about that pair at Arsenal who do quite well – but can you recall any Brazilian players who look *less* Brazilian than Edu and Gilberto Silva? Or have they simply 'adapted'?

Mirandinha memories

Seventeen years ago a stocky little Brazilian goalscorer named Mirandinha turned up in England to play for Newcastle United. He didn't make it, of course. Couldn't adapt. His English manager, Jim Smith, cut him loose with the immortal words: "As far as I'm concerned, he can rot in Brazil."

Brazilians, Go Home! Words that could almost serve as a motto for English football. To hell with the rest of the soccer world, and in particular with Brazil, the world's most successful and most admired soccer nation.

So on with the Premier League show, the world's greatest league. The yardstick for the rest of the world's football – except for minor affairs like the UEFA Champions League, the European Championship and the World Cup.

Notes & quotes

"I've never taken a penalty before for the national team. I think the last time was with the youth team. But nobody else wanted to do it."

Sweden's Olof Mellberg after his spot-kick was saved in the quarter-final shoot-out against Holland.

"I'm not saying Van der Meyde is a bad winger. He just can't cross the ball."

Johan Cruyff pulls no punches about his Dutch compatriot.

Cross questions...Van der Meyde

"He's not as tall as me and he's not as good in the air, but he's certainly better on the ground."

Michael Manniche, the one-time Danish hero of Benfica, on the new Portuguese hero who 'borrowed' his name (but forgot one 'n').

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Teenage kicks

The impact of Wayne Rooney, Cristiano Ronaldo and others on Euro 2004 has highlighted the importance of youth, speed and precociousness in the modern game. In a special feature, World Soccer writers select the 50 most exciting teenagers in world football

Contributions: Nick Bidwell, Michael Church, Paul Gardner, Mark Gleeson, Tim Vickery

ADRIANO
Born: 26.10.84; Club: Coritiba
Country: Brazil

Another from Brazil's endless production line of attacking left-backs, his big advantage is that a strong right foot gives him the extra option of cutting in on goal. Already in his third year in the Coritiba team. Has come up through the ranks with the national team, and was a late call-up to the Copa America squad.

Freddy ADU
02.06.89; DC United
United States

See feature, page 15.

Abel AGUILAR
06.01.85; Deportivo Cali
Colombia

An old head on teenage shoulders. Does nothing flashy, but his midfield marking and positional sense were key to Colombia's third-place finish in last year's World Youth Cup, and he confirmed his promise in this season's Libertadores Cup.

Juan Carlos ARCE
10.04.85; Oriente Petrolero
Bolivia

The most interesting player Bolivian football has produced in a while. Operates behind the striker, where despite a frail physique he takes responsibility for organising the attack, supplying pace, fluency and the threat of goals. Called up to his country's Copa America squad.

Lucas BIGLIA
30.01.86; Argentinos Juniors
Argentina

Commanding central midfielder whose fair hair and shared club connection invite instant comparisons with Fernando Redondo and Esteban Cambiasso. Has the class to be worthy of such company. Overwhelming choice as the outstanding player of last year's South American Under-17 Championship. Has since been hit by injury – perhaps a case of too much, too soon.

Valeri BOJINOV
15.02.86; Lecce (Ita)
Bulgaria

Lightning quick and a brilliant dribbler, the Bulgarian is one of Serie A's most exciting attackers, attracting interest from the likes of Milan, Juventus, Roma and Barcelona. Has been with Lecce for the past five years, and his reward for a fine 2003-04 season was a place in Bulgaria's European Championship squad.

Jimmy BRIAND
02.05.85; Rennes
France

Explosive, Paris-born striker whose speed and finishing instincts have led many in France to liken him to Djibril Cisse and Thierry Henry. Further proof that coaches at the French academy at Clairefontaine know what they are doing.

CARLOS ALBERTO
11.12.84; FC Porto (Por)
Brazil

A tale of cross-continental co-operation. His playmaking talent was always clear, but he had a wretched 2003 with Fluminense and Brazil's Under-20s, failing to deliver because of his tendency to dwell too long on the ball. Then at Porto, coach Jose Mourinho taught him to play collectively, and he made a key contribution to the club's Champions League triumph. The standard-bearer of Fluminense's youth scheme – there are plenty more coming through.

Francesc Fabregas, CESC
04.05.87; Arsenal (Eng)
Spain

Precocious central midfielder 'snatched' by Arsenal from Barcelona last year. Has all the assets of a star in the making: great vision, a wonderful range of pass, extreme confidence and goalscoring ability. The latter quality gives him an extra dimension compared to traditional deep-lying Barca playmakers such as Pep Guardiola and Xavi. The player of the tournament and top scorer at the 2003 World Under-17 Championship.

Davide CHIUMIENTO
02.11.84; Juventus (Ita)
Switzerland

Equally at home in attack or in a playmaking role, the Swiss Under-21 international combines sweet technique, imagination and goalscoring prowess. Came through the Juventus youth ranks and has a contract until 2007, but that has not stopped several clubs monitoring his situation.

CRISTIANO RONALDO
05.02.85; Manchester United (Eng)
Portugal

The Madeira-born winger has pace, mesmerising dribbling skills and flamboyance to spare. Joined Manchester United from Sporting Lisbon in a £12million deal a year ago and seems to have learnt the lesson that crowd-pleasing cannot always take priority over providing a good service from the flanks.

Lance DAVIDS
11.04.85; 1860 Munich (Ger)
South Africa

Made his Bundesliga debut last November for 1860 against neighbours Bayern Munich and survived being thrown into the cauldron to claim a regular starting berth behind the front two strikers in his club's abortive bid to stave off relegation. South Africa gave him a first cap against Australia in March, making him the second youngest player to represent the country.

Nigel DE JONG
31.11.84; Ajax
Holland

Yet another high-class youngster to roll off the Amsterdam production line. His great strength is his versatility,

Key to picture panel

1 Lucas Biglia	6 Diego	11 Gustavo Rodas	16 Lance Davids	21 Nigel De Jong
2 Jimmy Briand	7 Cristian Rodriguez	12 Sergio Jauregui	17 Jeremy Menez	22 Wayne Rooney
3 Bastian Schweinsteiger	8 Johann Vonlanthen	13 Cesc	18 Davide Chiumiento	23 Dayro Moreno
4 Babacar Gueye	9 Danny Szetela	14 Gerard Pique	19 Jefferson Farfan	24 Lukas Podolski
5 Ahmed Fathi	10 Cristiano Ronaldo	15 Carlos Alberto	20 Freddy Adu	25 Valeri Bojinov

being able to play in either full-back position or midfield. Won his first full cap for Holland earlier this year in a friendly with France. His father Jerry played at right-back and in midfield for PSV Eindhoven and Holland.

DIEGO
28.02.85; Santos
Brazil
South America's precocious Junior Zidane. Organises the attack with superb vision, has an exceptional range of passing and shows astonishing maturity. Has already been glorified in victory and pilloried in defeat – a sign of the responsibility he is prepared to take. Attracting interest from all over Europe.

DIEGO TARDELLI
10.05.85; Sao Paulo
Brazil
Another gem from the club that unearthed Kaka and Julio Baptista. This one, though, comes full of defects. He operates behind the central striker and has the ability to cause havoc. But has recently created even more problems off the field, and the club are tiring of his indiscipline.

Franck DJA DJEDJE
02.06.86; Paris Saint-Germain (Fra)
Ivory Coast
The likes of Didier Drogba and Aruna Dindane will keep the 18-year-old forward off the international scene for a while yet, but Dja Djedje was the pick of the young hopefuls at PSG last season and given two fleeting appearances in the League at the end of the season. It is expected he will form part of the first-team squad for the 2004-05 campaign.

Dino DJIBA
20.12.85; Metz (Fra)
Senegal
Part of the new generation of Senegalese talent brought into the squad after the disappointment of the quarter-final exit at the Nations Cup finals in Tunisia in February. Played in more than half of Metz's League matches last season. Joined the club's youth academy in 1999.

DONG Fangzhou
23.01.85; Royal Antwerp (Blg)
China
Made international headlines when he became the first Asian player to sign for Manchester United, joining from China's Dalian Shide before being loaned out to the English club's Belgian affiliate, Royal Antwerp. After struggling initially, Dong claimed his first goal for the Belgians in the 2-1 win over Cercle Brugge on April 10 but was unable to stop the club's relegation from the top flight.

Isah ELIAKWU
25.10.85; Internazionale (Ita)
Nigeria
The 18-year-old forward has yet to feature for Inter in Serie A but a measure of his potential was the protracted negotiations that the Italian club had with Belgian champions Anderlecht this summer over a potential loan move. If Eliakwu does go to the Brussels club, he can expect to see some Champions League action over the next few months.

Jefferson FARFAN
26.10.84; PSV Eindhoven (Hol)
Peru
Peru's answer to Wayne Rooney. Like the Croxteth boy wonder, the Peruvian is a squatly-built second striker who catches the eye with his uninhibited forward charges and whiplash shooting. Probably quicker than Rooney, too, though he still has plenty to learn about playing with his back to goal. But Farfan is no stranger to responsibility. His goals took Alianza Lima to their latest League title, a contribution more in keeping with that of a seasoned international striker. Peru coach Paulo Autori unleashed Farfan when South America's World Cup qualifiers got under way last September. Farfan has not disappointed and went into the Copa America with five international goals to his name. His exploits attracted interest from all over Europe, and after a protracted wrangle PSV won his signature. Farfan seems unflustered. "I'll always enjoy myself playing football," he says, and that should also apply to those who watch him.

Ahmed FATHI
11.10.84; Ismaili
Egypt
The overlapping right-back was another of the finds of this year's African Nations Cup finals, having also impressed at the World Youth Cup in the United Arab Emirates last November. Fathi now has seven caps for the senior national side, having made his debut last year against France in Paris. Helped Ismaili to the African Champions League Final last December and is said to be heading to Paris Saint-Germain soon for £1m.

Fredy GUARIN
30.06.86; Envigado
Colombia
The leader of an extremely promising Colombian generation who reached the semi-finals of last year's World Under-17 Championship. A central midfielder of effervescent personality and spectacular long-range shooting, he will be expected to produce when Colombia host next year's South American Under-20 Championship.

Babacar GUEYE
02.03.86; Metz (Fra)
Senegal
Senegal's new striking sensation has cushioned the blow for his country of the absence of suspended El Hadji Diouf at the start of their 2006 World Cup qualifying campaign. Made 23 appearances for Metz in France's Ligue 1 last season, 12 in the starting line-up, though he scored only once. His international return has been a lot more prolific.

Labinot HARBUZI
04.04.86; Feyenoord (Hol)
Sweden
This Swedish attacking midfield prodigy of Yugoslav origins had scores of clubs coveting him after breaking into the Malmo first team at the age of just 15. He finally opted to take the well-trodden route from Sweden to Feyenoord in Holland. Has great vision, touch and industriousness.

Sergio JAUREGUI
13.03.85; Blooming
Bolivia
Rugged centre-back who is already featuring in his country's senior national team. For over a decade Bolivia's defence has been built around the likes of Juan Manuel Pena, Oscar Sanchez and Marco Sandy. Finally, they seem to have a natural successor.

Juan Francisco Torres, JUANFRAN
09.01.85; Real Madrid
Spain
Very skilful, dynamic right-sided midfielder reportedly attracting Chelsea. A member of the Spanish Under-20 side that finished runners-up in the 2003 World Youth Cup.

Hosein KAEBI
23.12.85; Foolad
Iran
The talk of Iranian football for two years since making his debut for the full national side as a 16-year-old against Slovakia in February 2002. The midfielder has already attracted interest from European clubs and has had a trial with Wolverhampton in England. Kaebi is seen as a key player in the future of the national team, with his leadership and skill on the ball.

Salomon KALOU
05.08.85; Feyenoord (Hol)
Ivory Coast
Younger brother of Bonaventure, who frustrated coaches at Feyenoord and is now playing at Auxerre. Salomon is also a right-sided winger with the same quick qualities. He has a contract until 2007 at Feyenoord but was loaned to Excelsior this past season to pick up some first-team experience. Says he has modelled his game on that of Thierry Henry.

Vincent KOMPANY
10.04.86; Anderlecht
Belgium
Athletic, quick and powerful, the teenage centre-back could not have dreamed of a better first season with the Anderlecht pros, playing a key role as the Brussels club won the domestic League and breaking into the senior Belgian national team. Looks like a young Marcel Desailly.

Niko KRANJCAR
13.08.84; Dinamo Zagreb
Croatia
Brilliant playmaker cast from the same mould as great compatriot Zvonimir Boban. Mature and a natural leader, he was only 19 when appointed captain of Dinamo Zagreb.

Obafemi MARTINS
28.10.84; Internazionale (Ita)
Nigeria
Recently capped at senior international level by Nigeria after giving the country's selectors the runaround for a year. He turns 20 in October but has already featured in the UEFA Champions League and scored in Serie A. Named African Young Player of the Year for 2003.

Freddy ADU

02.06.89; DC United
United States

Back in April, when Major League Soccer began its ninth season, the talk was all about Freddy Adu. Here was a precociously talented 14-year-old who, it seemed, was going to take the League by storm, was going to dazzle everyone with Pele-like skills and so on and so on.

Doubters were swamped by a tidal wave of publicity led by Nike, who bestowed a million-dollar contract on the boy before he had even signed as a pro.

The doubts were not about Adu's talent; they concerned the high-pressure force-feeding atmosphere that almost instantly sprung up around him. He was about to become the youngest American professional athlete in over 100 years. Of course TV and the mass-circulation magazines were interested.

Would it be possible for him to live up to all the glowing praise? We know a bit more now, and the answer is a clear 'no'.

During his first three months in MLS, Adu played in 14 games (of which he started five), scored two goals and registered one assist, by no means stats of a superstar. But he has more than held his own as the League's glamour boy.

He is featured weekly on telephone conference calls with the media, he gets his own mini-conference after each game, and is remarkably assured. Everywhere he has played, the crowds have poured in; games featuring his team, DC United, average over 9,500, more than would normally be expected.

On the field, suddenly confronted with bigger, faster, more experienced and, yes, rougher opponents, Adu has found the going tough.

But few doubt his talent is maturing all the time. His wonderful individual goal against Los Angeles Galaxy – Adu skipped past three defenders before firing into the top corner from 18 yards – was spectacular proof of his promise.

Adu admits: "I didn't think it would be easy. I just have to deal with it."

His club coach, Peter Nowak, adds: "Freddy is still a young kid. A special player, yes, but he has to learn."

Adu's position has not been helped by DC's poor start to the season. The good news is the publicity circus has cooled off without, apparently, any 'Freddy-is-a-flop' backlash. Hopefully, there will follow a period in which Adu can develop under less frenetic pressure.

Paul Gardner

Jeremy MENEZ
30.11.86; Sochaux
France
The French Under-17 striker was tipped earlier this year to be en route for Manchester United or Arsenal, only to decide to continue his development with Sochaux. Has now signed his first pro contract with the eastern French club. Opportunistic, strong and mobile.

Dayro MORENO
16.09.85; Once Caldas
Colombia
Right-sided attacker who played his way to prominence in his club's triumphant run in this year's Libertadores Cup, featuring strongly in the home games. A wonderfully fluent mover in open spaces, at this stage he looks more of a maker than a taker of chances.

Takayuki MORIMOTO
07.05.88; Tokyo Verdy 1969
Japan
Tokyo Verdy manager Ossie Ardiles gave Morimoto his J.League debut in this season's opening game, against Jubilo Iwata, bringing the striker on as a substitute and in the process handing him the honour of being the youngest player to appear in Japanese professional football at the age of just 15. Morimoto then became the League's youngest scorer after he struck the winner against JEF United Ichihara two days before his 16th birthday. With his shaven head, powerful build and trickery at pace, he has drawn comparisons to Ronaldo. Already a member of Japan's Under-19 team.

Samir NASRI
26.06.87; Marseille
France
The attacking midfielder or front-runner scored plenty of brownie points by hitting the winner for France in their victory over Spain in the Final of this year's European Under-17 Championship. Quick off the mark and a sublime dribbler, he is said to be on the shopping list of a number of Italian clubs.

Dennis OLIECH
02.02.85; Al Arabi (Qat)
Kenya
A dribbling wizard with a huge reservoir of skill but perhaps still lacking the football brain to put it all together. The Kenyan had scouts drooling over his performances at this year's African Nations Cup finals, though he is firmly entrenched, and handsomely enriched, in the League in Qatar. Turned 19 in February, although there are suspicions he is older than the date of birth in his passport.

Femi OPABUNMI
03.03.85; Grasshopper (Swi)
Nigeria
It is difficult to believe that a player who competed at the last World Cup finals two years ago is still a teenager but that is what Opabunmi's documentation claims. It is even more difficult when you meet him in the flesh, but whatever his real age, the Nigerian is recorded as the second youngest-competitor at the World Cup. Injury blighted last season for him at Grasshopper but he did feature in their League title-winning side of 2003. There is a real hope Opabunmi will return to his nippy form on the left wing this coming campaign.

Gerard PIQUE Bernabeu
12.04.87; Manchester United (Eng)
Spain
Stylish central defender who can also play with distinction at left-back. The Spanish Under-17 international recently left Barcelona for Old Trafford, signing a five-year contract.

Lukas PODOLSKI
04.06.85; Koln
Germany
The rookie Koln striker took the Bundesliga by storm last term with his extreme pace, strong running and stinging left-footed shooting. Born in Poland but brought up in the Rhineland, he has nailed his colours to the German mast and has the ability to lead the *Nationalmannschaft* line for the next decade. Came on as a half-time substitute in Germany's Euro 2004 defeat by the Czech Republic.

Nicola POZZI
30.06.86; Milan
Italy
An excellent second striker, mobile, physical, very aware and with a refined technique. Milan beat Juventus and Inter to his signature at the start of the year, luring him away from Serie C Cesena.

Gustavo RODAS
16.01.86; Newell's Old Boys
Argentina
Stocky attacking midfielder who made his debut in Argentina's top division at the age of 16. Forced out of last year's World Under-17 Championship, so will look to make an impression at Under-20 level in 2005 instead. An elegant striker of the ball.

Cristian RODRIGUEZ
30.09.85; Penarol
Uruguay
Stocky, slippery left-sided midfielder or withdrawn striker with a low centre of gravity and a fine left foot. Known as 'the little onion' – perhaps because he can unpeel the defence, perhaps because he can make them cry.

Wayne ROONEY
24.10.85; Everton
England
See feature, page 18.

Bastian SCHWEINSTEIGER
01.08.84; Bayern Munich
Germany
The right-sided or central midfielder underlined his promise with a fine display in the Bernabeu against Real Madrid in the Champions League last season and earned a late call-up to Germany's Euro 2004 squad. He turned out to be one of the few bright sparks in a disappointing campaign in Portugal. Full of confidence – some might say too much – strong on the ball and always positive.

Danny SZETELA
17.06.87; no club
United States
Seventeen-year-old Szetela is an all-action, 90-minute midfielder who caught the eye of many scouts with his performances for the USA during last year's Under-17 World Championship in Finland. That wasn't so easy to do when you consider that Freddy Adu was the star of the team. But Szetela had already had trials at Manchester United and Manchester City. After the tournament, he spent six days training with Everton. He has not ruled out joining an MLS club, but his preferred route to stardom is via Europe. Of Polish parentage, Szetela already holds a Polish passport.

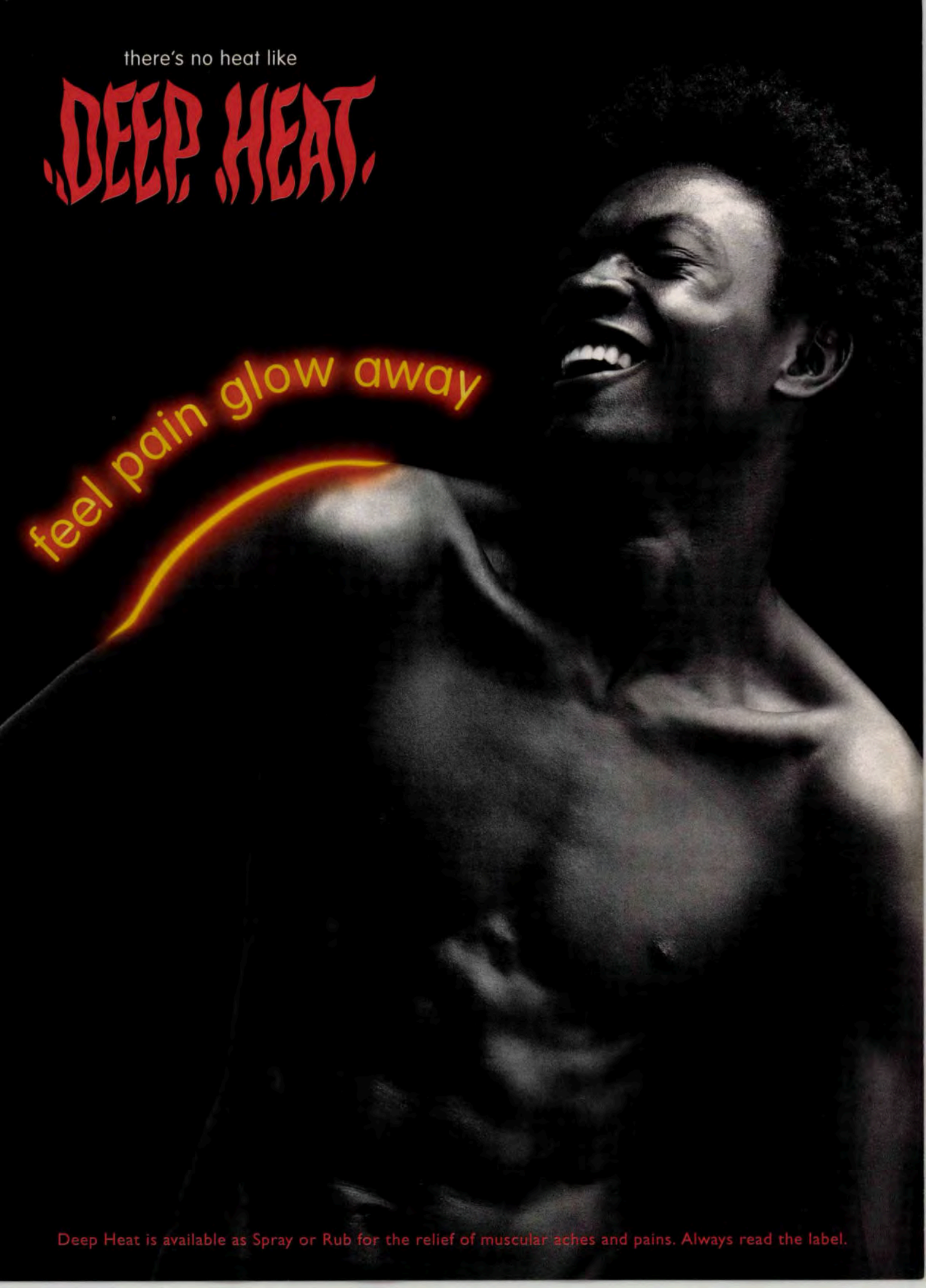
Oscar USTARI
03.07.86; Independiente
Argentina
Looks like Argentina's best bet for years to become a world-class goalkeeper. Spreads calm through the defence with his sound technique and decision-making. He has already experienced the senior national team atmosphere when invited to sit on the bench when Argentina played a couple of Copa America warm-up matches at the end of June.

Luis Antonio VALENCIA
04.08.85; El Nacional
Ecuador
Talented midfielder with a burst of acceleration and a powerful shot. Already capped at senior level, and looks to be Ecuador's best all-round midfield operator since the emergence of Edison Mendez.

Anthony VANDEN BORRE
24.10.87; Anderlecht
Belgium
Although the 16-year-old defender had played only a handful of games in the Anderlecht first team, Belgium boss Aime Anthuenis had no hesitation in calling him up to his squad in the spring. Vanden Borre can operate at right-back or in central defence, and is tough, mobile and technically assured. Has Congolese roots.

Junior VIZA
03.04.85; Alianza Lima
Peru
Very impressive central midfielder, tough in the tackle, neat and strong in possession, and with a rocket in his right foot. Did well in a losing side in the South American Under-23 Championship earlier this year. It has been a long time since Peruvian football produced an all-rounder of such potential.

Johann VONLANTHEN
01.02.86; PSV Eindhoven (Hol)
Switzerland
Became the youngest scorer in European Championship finals history when grabbing Switzerland's only goal of the tournament, against France in Coimbra. Born and raised in Colombia, he threatened to switch his international allegiance to the South American country when he was dropped to the bench for an Under-21 match last year.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Wayne ROONEY

24.10.85; Everton
England

Wayne Rooney's four goals at Euro 2004 catapulted him out of his high domestic orbit and into the international stratosphere. The level of expectation the Everton teenager must now shoulder is far beyond even the fuss that has gone before.

Remarkable enough were the unreserved words of praise from England coach Sven Goran Eriksson, who said: "He's absolutely fantastic, not only at scoring goals but the way he plays football – he's a complete footballer. He deserves all the attention and all the front-page headlines. I sometimes feel I shouldn't say too much, but he has been absolutely incredible.

"I don't try to tell him how to score goals. I couldn't. All we do is tell him some tactical things we need the strikers to do. Otherwise, technically, it is better I don't say anything because his vision is incredible.

"I've worked with many outstanding young talents – such as Rui Costa, Roberto Baggio, Paulo Sousa – but Rooney is the best for the way he both plays his football and scores his goals.

"He does not make a lot of fuss or talk a lot, he just goes out and does it. He's not worried if the opposition is France, Croatia, Switzerland or Turkey. It's like he's going out on a school pitch and saying: 'Give me the ball and I will enjoy myself.' He also has his feet very, very much on the ground."

Eriksson was also asked, famously, to compare Rooney's impact with that of the young Pele at the 1958 World Cup. Within minutes the issue had ballooned way out of context because the original issue was not about individuals but impact.

The same might have been asked, in World Cup terms, about Amarildo for Brazil in 1962, Paolo Rossi for Italy in 1978 and Toto Schillaci for Italy in 1990; in European Championship terms about Dieter Muller in 1976 and Enzo Scifo in 1984.

In fact, Pele did not attend Euro 2004 and, while impressed by a few TV clips, was in no real position to assess the media's pretender either way.

Time resolved the question anyway. Pele was a tournament winner in 1958; Rooney had long limped off home by the time Euro 2004 was wrapped up. Out of sight but certainly not out of mind.

Keir Radnedge

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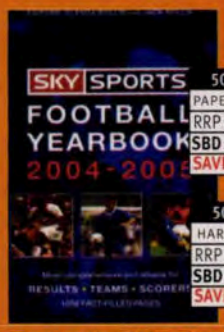

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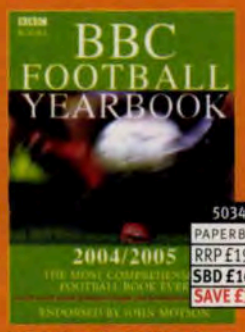

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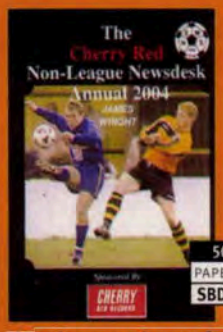

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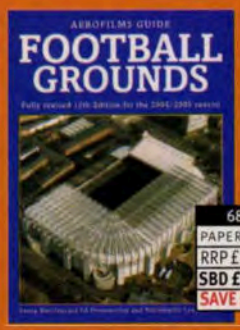

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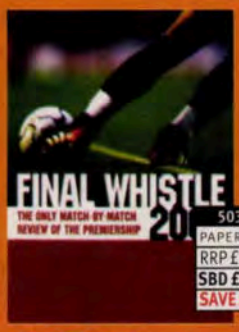

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WSoccJULY 04

EURO 2004 FINAL

Greeks win it with graft

Keir Radnedge on how the outsiders worked over the hosts

July 4

PORTUGAL 0 GREECE 1

TAKE ANY TOURNAMENT shy on technique or talent or class and football history records how organisation, discipline and hard work can win the day. The surprise of Euro 2004 was that Greece made those qualities count rather than any one of the usual quota of northern European pretenders.

For fit, hard-working, well-organised South Korea at the 2002 World Cup read Greece. The single difference was that Euro 2004 had no Brazil so Otto Rehhagel's well-oiled, well-programmed machine took the crowning glory. They beat the hosts twice over (by 2-1 and 1-0), they held group favourites Spain, they lost a match that did not matter (to Russia), they knocked out the holders and favourites (France) and they toppled the best-balanced footballing outfit (Czech Republic). Any team who can do that deserve to be crowned champions. No contest.

Portugal, to the gawping disbelief of their supportive if never fanatical supporters (not in the stadiums, at least), came up just short. The golden generation – only Luis Figo and Rui Costa (both 1991 World Youth Cup winners) and Fernando Couto (1989) survived in point of fact – were not 22 carat. On the day that mattered most they were tarnished by their old failing, a drastic inability to put the ball in the net. But then any host side who use only a lone striker – and a hopelessly ineffective one such as Pauleta at that – will not carry off the prize to reward all the behind-the-scenes organisational work.

Quaintly, Portugal's failure to win also silenced overnight all the gloating about 'the best Euro finals ever'. The climactic game was one of the poorest, despite the dream prospect: Portugal, who had hardly dared hope they would be there, against Greece, who had never dared imagine it.

For the Portuguese destiny beckoned –

the golden generation were home to claim their due. Trouble was, the golden generation had glittered only in their own backyard, when winning the 1991 World Youth Cup. Had they been the real thing they would have won the odd trophy in someone else's garden in between.

This is not to denigrate Greece or the remarkable job accomplished by Rehhagel with outsiders originally quoted at 80-1 to win the tournament. English managers would warm to his 'step-by-step' approach.

The greatest reward Greek football can bestow for the emigrant German is not honorary citizenship but an administrative revolution to sweep away the legacy of years of corruption and financial incompetence.

The onus was always with Portugal, and the Greeks were delighted to concede the point and plan for it so well they did not miss the suspended Giorgios Karagounis.

Giorgios Seitaridis and Panagiotis Fissas – playing at his Benfica home – stood wide on whichever winger danced their way, whether Cristiano Ronaldo or Figo, who was earning his Portuguese record-equalling 110th cap; Michalis Kapsis shrugged off a knee bruise to pocket Pauleta; sweeper Traianos Dellas sneaked forward occasionally into midfield, where Kostas Katsouranis tucked in behind the industrious Angelos Basinas and tireless skipper Theo Zagorakis, making a Greek record-equalling 95th international appearance.

'I have united Greeks in a way beyond any politician'

Otto Rehhagel

Cohesive system

Stelios Giannakopoulos patrolled the left flank to stifle Miguel's support of Ronaldo, while Angelos Haristeas also hung back off the front line. The Greeks thus had a cohesive system in which no one ever lacked support whether falling back or pushing forward.

Greece counted on Portugal making individual errors, but also might have suffered for their own. Giannakopoulos gave away possession too often for the comfort of Rehhagel. Once, when his guard dropped, Miguel spurted forward, took a knockdown from Ronaldo but saw his angled right-footed drive pushed on away for a corner by Antonis Nikopolidis. The keeper then saved clumsily from an optimistic drive by Pauleta before Maniche, less effective than in previous outings, fired wide after the Greeks half-cleared another corner.

As the first half grew scrappier so the Greeks knew they had won the first points against a Portuguese side who had to make an unscheduled change when Miguel, injured in a collision with Pauleta, had to be substituted by Paulo Ferreira.

Portugal had needed to work for all their victories so the optimistic aura enveloping the event was not dissipated by Markus Merk's half-time whistle. Indeed, such hosting happiness was missing from Holland and Belgium in 2000 and will be lacking from Austria and Switzerland in 2008. But then, of course, that is also down to national character – an awkward issue in a sporting context.

UEFA's leaders had talked plenty in Lisbon about restoring national team values by enforcing foreign player quota limits on clubs. The evidence of Euro 2004 was that, instead, more could be done to remind all concerned that it is scoring goals that wins individual matches and then tournaments. Portugal coach Luiz Felipe Scolari, having had Real Madrid's Ronaldo, Rivaldo and Ronaldinho at his command two years ago for Brazil, maybe underestimated their worth.

Creative players need to feel their work is not in vain and perhaps it was here Portugal fell down. Deco and Maniche never pulled the strings as perceptively as against Spain and England. But then Ronaldo and Figo insisted on cutting inside and adding to the Rehhagel-inspired traffic jam.

WHAT THEY SAID

● **Otto Rehhagel**
"The Greeks made football history today. It's a sensation. The team played great football. Portugal were technically better than us but we took advantage of our chances."

● **Luiz Felipe Scolari**
"We ask forgiveness from the people because we weren't able to achieve the goal we all wanted. It's hard to lose this way but Greece won defensively and because they knew how to play that way."

● **Angelos Haristeas**
"When I scored I didn't know how but I just knew that we were going to win it."

Champions...Rehhagel is ecstatic

Defining moment...Haristeas climbs above Jorge Andrade and stranded keeper Ricardo to head the only goal

No way through...Nikopolidis cuts out a cross meant for Pauleta

"Greece are well-organised, work hard and punish your mistakes," said Scolari later. First-hand evidence arrived on 57 minutes. Seitaridis dashed magnificently in pursuit of an apparent lost cause down the right and forced a corner off Ronaldo's shins. Basinas shaped for the outswinger but, instead, arrowed his kick to the edge of the six-yard box, where Haristeas rose above Jorge Andrade to score his third goal of the finals.

Someone had forgotten the lesson of the Greeks' carbon-copy goal in the semi-final against the Czechs.

Portuguese desperation

The remainder of a poor second half was largely about Portuguese desperation. Rui Costa made his last international appearance and was followed into the action by Nuno Gomes, seeking the gift of a goal the day ahead of his 28th birthday. Nikopolidis was tested twice apiece by Ronaldo and Figo. All to no avail.

Thus Greece marked the year of the Athens Olympics with a sporting achievement that may be remembered longer than whatever the Games may bring the nation. Portugal failed to emulate Spain (1964), Italy (1968) and France (1984) by winning as hosts. Their defeat also balanced the books. Greece have met Portugal 12 times, losing four, drawing four and now winning four.

"I have united Greeks in a way beyond any politician," said a properly proud Rehhagel, the first foreign coach to win this crown. But something unsatisfying nags about a football tournament that is overtaken by issues of national self-worth – which had been aroused for the Portuguese and explained the intense demand for Euro 2004 to be hailed as the best European Championship ever.

Lars-Christer Olsson said it had been and, as UEFA's chief executive, talked from a position of power in terms of finance and organisation. But Michel Platini, who has seen European Championships as player, manager and committee man, observed: "The best ever? They say that every four years."

One thing is for sure: it was the best ever for Greece.

THE MATCH IN DETAIL

July 4 - Lisbon (Luz)

Portugal 0

Greece 1 (Haristeas 57)

HT: 0-0. Att: 62,865. Ref: Merk (Ger)

	MIN	
Costinha BOOKED – trip on Seitaridis	12	
Miguel's shot from edge of area is tipped behind	14	
	16	Vryzas and Haristeas work opening in area, Ricardo saves with feet from Haristeas
Pauleta's shot from outside area held by Nikopolidis	17	
Deco corner headed out, Maniche shoots wide	24	
	28	Giannakopoulos free-kick claimed by Ricardo
SUB Paulo Ferreira for Miguel	43	
	45	Basinas BOOKED – handball
	HALF TIME	
	57	GOAL Corner curled in by Basinas, HARISTEAS jumps above Jorge Andrade to head past Ricardo. 0-1
Cristiano Ronaldo flashes shot at Nikopolidis, who palms it away	59	
SUB Rui Costa for Costinha; Maniche takes the midfield holding role	60	
Rui Costa runs into area but crosses to no one	62	
Deco blasts free-kick over	63	Seitaridis BOOKED for not retreating at free-kick
Rui Costa crosses but Figo's shot is held by keeper	64	
Figo free-kick claimed by Nikopolidis	67	Fissas BOOKED – late challenge on Figo
Rui Costa curls shot wide	72	
SUB Nuno Gomes for Pauleta	74	
Ronaldo, played in on keeper, overhits shot	75	
	76	SUB Venetidis for Giannakopoulos
Ronaldo's blasted shot deflected wide	80	
Rui Costa's low shot pushed away	81	SUB Papadopoulos for Vryzas
	85	Papadopoulos BOOKED – trip on Rui Costa
Figo turns in area and his shot is deflected just wide	90	
Jorge Andrade heads over from Deco's cross		
Nuno Valente BOOKED – trip on Zagorakis		

Flag day...Athenians take to the streets to celebrate Greece's triumph in Portugal

After the party...

...comes the challenge of reviving domestic Greek football.

Lou Economopoulos reports from Athens

NOW THAT MUCH of the hullabaloo has died down after Greece's astonishing Euro 2004 performance, the question asked by many is whether the same success can be mustered on the domestic front.

The groundwork has been laid. Six sparkling new or freshly-renovated stadiums have been prepared for the Athens Olympic Games football tournament this summer. The facilities will be there, but will the same mentality that has plagued the sport for so many years still be around?

It seems things have changed, at least when it comes to the national team.

The Greek federation coughed up money to build an ultra-modern training facility, a move that was part of a wider bid to demonstrate that the national team should be taken seriously. And the players themselves, often without discipline and organisation, were made into a team by the German ingenuity of Otto Rehhagel.

But at club level, it's an entirely different story. Most of the Greek First, Second and Third Division clubs are seriously in debt, the most high-profile being AEK Athens, reportedly £50million in the red. Soaring players' salaries and mismanagement have left Greek clubs bleeding and with little hope of survival.

And the regular scenes of violence on and off the pitch have made the sport a no-show for many prospective spectators.

The state has been slow to take the proper measures to bring new life to the domestic game. But after the success story of the national team, with Greek pride riding high, now is the time to take action.

The new Conservative government is starting to tackle club debts. Sports Under-secretary George Orfanos announced a plan that would reduce AEK's debt to the state (taxes etc) by 30 per cent, a figure drastically below the club's hopes of a 95 per cent cut.

Orfanos promised AEK would be given flexible payback status that would enable the ailing club to service their state-related debt over a 10-year period. But he also warned that the debt-relief programme would be rigidly implemented.

"We're talking about debts owed by clubs to the public sector. Not a single euro of actual debt will be spared," said Orfanos. "We have given them a brief grace period to find the money and get their legal affairs in order before the new championship season begins in September."

'Clubs will have to assume their own responsibility for keeping order within stadiums'
Greek Sports Under-secretary George Orfanos

And what about the violence? "Clubs will have to assume their own responsibility for keeping order within the stadiums," said Orfanos, who is in favour of clubs employing private security forces. "Violence is keeping ordinary spectators away. In 15 years we have lost more than 100,000 who used to attend matches. We want them back."

This is all part of the main question – can Greece seize the opportunity offered by popular passion and enthusiasm from the Euro 2004 victory and ensure a radical overhaul of the clubs and the leagues?

Athens newspaper *Kathimerini* stated in an editorial: "The central goal of the government policy would be to establish a fair and transparent domestic championship and clean up the sleaze-ridden system in which the teams are currently mired. The responsibility lies mostly with the government, which only has to enforce the law in a strict and fair manner. The government must not hesitate to punish wrongdoers in accordance with legislative provisions."

Fans' support

It is certain the state will have the support of the fans. Their behaviour during Greece's games at Euro 2004 showed that what people want is to be able to visit the stadium on weekends and enjoy good, competitive play without match-fixing, bullying, hooliganism and the other ills that have dogged the domestic League for decades.

The *Kathimerini* editorial continued: "Hooliganism and organised violence are also part of the same problem. It is the club owners and their acolytes who do most to inspire, stir or even orchestrate violence. They have the legal and civic responsibility for the violence which erupts in almost every match."

The government has not been too keen on causing problems with club owners, who often help provide large election campaign funds and generally use their power whether in the media or elsewhere to sway opinions.

So, can things change in Greek football? Unless a personality like Rehhagel takes charge, and convinces the Greeks that discipline and organisation are necessary, things will most likely remain the same.

After all, three years of bureaucracy and political wrangling kept the organisers of the Olympics from making a good start in preparing for the Games and now they have been forced to play catch-up. Then again, the Greeks might pull it off as they are known for surprises. Just ask Portugal, France, Spain and the Czech Republic.

Greece, European champions 2004

1 Antonis NIKOPOLIDIS
Born: 14.10.71.
Club: Olympiakos. 49 caps (0 gls)
George Clooney lookalike who played in all six games at Euro 2004 as undisputed first-choice goalkeeper. Recently agreed a three-year deal with Olympiakos after a dispute with Panathinaikos over a new contract. Played only two games, both in the Greek Cup, in the second half of the 2003-04 season.

2 Giorgios SEITARIDIS
15.06.81.
Panathinaikos. 24 caps (0 gls)
The best right-back in the tournament, he also adapted well to playing as a central defensive man-marker in a three-man back line. But any clubs hoping to sign him on the basis of his performances in Portugal will be disappointed: he has already agreed to join FC Porto for next season.

3 Stelios VENETIDIS
19.11.76.
Olympiakos. 43 caps (0 gls)
Left-sided defender who made substitute appearances against Spain and Portugal (Final) and started the final group game against Russia. Played 20 games for Olympiakos last season but was sidelined with a knee injury for 10 weeks.

4 Nikos DABIZAS
03.08.73.
Leicester (Eng). 68 caps (0 gls)
Experienced centre-back, unused in the tournament.

5 Traianos DELLAS
31.01.76.
Roma (Ita). 23 caps (1 gl)
One of the individual fairytale stories of the tournament. A journeyman defender who scored the only goal of the semi-final and was outstanding in the Final. Used mostly as the spare man at the back. Spent two and a half seasons at Sheffield United, playing a total of 28 games, before a move back to Greece (AEK Athens) and then on to Italy. Struggled to establish himself at Perugia (eight games in 2001-02) but moved on to Roma, where he played 10 games in 2002-03 and 14 in 2003-04.

6 Angelos BASINAS
03.01.76.
Panathinaikos. 47 caps (3 gls)
Defensive midfielder who played a crucial role at Euro 2004, especially from set-pieces. Supplied the corner from which Haristeas scored in the Final. Played in five matches at Euro 2004. Has spent nine seasons at Panathinaikos.

7 Theo ZAGORAKIS
27.10.71.
AEK Athens. 95 caps (0 gls)
Captain and leader of the team who earned a record 95th cap in the Final. Has spent four seasons at AEK Athens after three years at Leicester. Formed a formidable partnership with Basinas in central midfield.

8 Stelios GIANNAKOPOULOS
12.07.74.
Bolton (Eng). 41 caps (6 gls)
Started three games at the tournament, including the Final, when he took the place of the suspended Karagounis. A regular for Bolton after seven seasons at Olympiakos.

9 Angelos HARISTEAS
09.02.80.
Werder Bremen (Ger). 33 caps (11 gls)
One of the surprise stars of the tournament, he is highly effective either as a lone striker or in a withdrawn attacking midfield role on the right. Now guaranteed a place in Greek footballing history as the scorer of the goal in the Final. Also scored four times for German Double-winners Werder Bremen last season in 24 appearances, many as substitute. Previously with Aris Salonika.

10 Vassilis TSIARTAS
12.11.73.
AEK Athens. 63 caps (11 gls)
The star of the qualifying campaign made four substitute appearances in Portugal but did not make the impact many had hoped. Supplied the corner from which Dellas scored the semi-final silver goal.

11 Demis NIKOLAIDIS
17.09.73.
Atletico Madrid (Spa). 52 caps (16 gls)
Greece's top scorer but injury and the form of Haristeas restricted his impact at Euro 2004. Started the quarter-final against France and made three other substitute appearances.

12 Kostas CHALKIAS
30.05.75.
Panathinaikos. 5 caps (0 gls)
Second-choice keeper who displaced Nikopolidis at club level, but stayed on the bench during Euro 2004.

13 Fanis KATERGIANNAKIS
16.02.74.
Olympiakos. 6 caps (0 gls)
Third-choice keeper, unused in Portugal.

14 Panagiotis FISSAS
12.06.73.
Benfica (Por). 36 caps (4 gls)
Left-back who started five games in Portugal. Comfortable on the ball and in the Stadium of Light – he joined Benfica halfway through last season after his contract with Panathinaikos expired. Starred in Benfica's Portuguese Cup Final win over FC Porto.

15 Zissis VRYZAS
09.11.73.
Fiorentina (Ita). 50 caps (8 gls)
Tireless striker who led the line superbly in five matches, having been suspended for the quarter-final against France. Dropped down a division in Italy last season, joining Serie B club Fiorentina, after three and a half years at Perugia.

16 Pantelis KAFES
24.06.78.
Olympiakos. 18 caps (2 gls)
Attacking midfielder, unused in Portugal.

17 Georgios GEORGIADIS
08.03.72.
Olympiakos. 59 caps (11 gls)
Goalscoring midfielder, unused in Portugal.

18 Yannis GOUMAS
24.05.75.
Panathinaikos. 26 caps (0 gls)
Reserve defender, unused in Portugal.

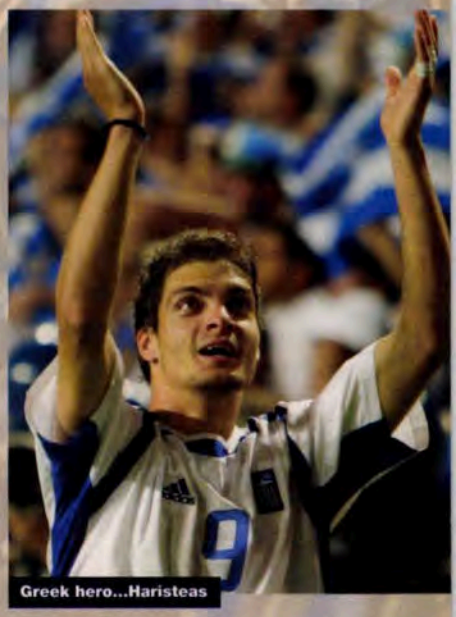
19 Michalis KAPSIS
18.10.73.
AEK Athens. 15 caps (0 gls)
Outstanding in central defence in Greece's six games at Euro 2004, particularly when man-marking Jan Koller in the semi-final. Son of former Panathinaikos star Anthimos Kapsis.

20 Giorgios KARAGOUNIS
06.03.77.
Internazionale (Ita). 34 caps (4 gls)
Highly impressive in his four starts but missed the group game against Russia and the Final through suspension. Disappointing first season in Italy with Inter, making only two starts and seven subs appearances. Scored the opening goal of the tournament against Portugal.

21 Kostas KATSOURANIS
21.06.79.
AEK Athens. 12 caps (0 gls)
A very effective tournament, battling, grafting and running in midfield alongside club-mate Zagorakis.

22 Dimitrios PAPADOPOULOS
20.10.81.
Panathinaikos. 9 caps (1 gl)
Kazakhstan-born striker who started against Russia and appeared as a sub in the Final. Spent two seasons in England with Burnley before moving to Panathinaikos last summer.

23 Vassilis LAKIS
10.09.76.
AEK Athens. 31 caps (3 gls)
Right-sided midfielder who made two substitute appearances at Euro 2004.


Greek hero...Haristeas

Good behaviour...there were virtually no match-zone hooligan incidents involving England fans

The finals – A to Z

Keir Radnedge takes an alphabetical trip through the tournament

All for one: Football is a team game – although that can be forgotten amid the hype over superstars, *galacticos*, *mediaticos* and the Toytown spending habits of a Berlusconi or Abramovich. As Greece showed, team strength can make the side better than the sum of the individual parts.

Bankable: UEFA again celebrated record revenues and profits, so the European federation and its Portuguese partners can be rightly proud of having more money to plough back into the game.

Confederations Cup: The one excuse the French – in their hasty retreat – forgot. But last summer the Confederations Cup cut two valuable weeks out of their players' holidays. Even continental footballers no longer benefit from effective breaks in mid-season. The need to cast that tragedy-tarnished, rubbishy tournament into the dustbin becomes more pertinent with every 'fatigue factor' whinge.

Disqualification – should have been the fate of the Estadio Municipal in Braga, a quirky piece of sporting architecture that the players despised. A rock face and a grassy knoll behind the goals are no substitutes for the atmospheric and geographic fixes provided by stands and fans. Just as tournament pitches are standardised, so stadium layouts should be cohesive (Braga hosted only two matches anyway; to what point?). Otherwise Portugal, by and large, had everything in place, which is as much as can be asked of a host nation.

Tarnished trophy...France win the Confederations Cup

Endangered: The survival of German federation president Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder. The knives were being sharpened even before Ottmar Hitzfeld rejected his offer to succeed Rudi Voller as national coach. MV stands for re-election in October and his prospects do not look good. That would raise questions about his presence and credibility within both UEFA and FIFA, an embarrassing situation less than two years before Germany hosts the World Cup.

Fatigue factor: An attractive scapegoat. The busy programmes of the major leagues are again a popular target for buck-passing officials and coaches. But come the semi-finals did Portugal look tired, or the Czechs, or the Greeks, or the Dutch? I did not see it. And the 92 players from those four squads included no fewer than 42 players from the Big Five leagues.

Rock and a hard place...players despised Braga's Municipal stadium

Gone: Eight managers (at press time, anyway) handed back the baton after the finals: Plamen Markov (Bulgaria), Otto Baric (Croatia), Jacques Santini (France), Rudi Voller (Germany), Dick Advocaat (Holland), Giovanni Trapattoni (Italy), reluctant Inaki Saez (Spain) and Sweden's Tommy Soderberg.

Headliners: Every event needs a handful of such matches to anchor it in history and fans' memory banks; Euro 2004 achieved that target thanks to the Czechs' dramatic comeback from 2-0 down to beat Holland 3-2, France's stoppage-time overtaking of England, and both Portugal's emotionally-draining victories over Spain and then England.

Information: Lacking on UEFA's Euro 2004 website. All manner of material was up there but if you wanted a simple page-grab of the basic stuff – result, goalscorers, goal times, line-ups with substitutions, yellow and red cards, referee and match attendance – forget it. No wonder there were zillions of hits – they were probably from fans desperately trying time and time again to find out what really happened.

Joyful: The behaviour of England fans even in defeat(s). Hard to remember the last time a major finals passed with next to no match-zone hooliganism. 'Holiday yob' misbehaviour caused the usual problems down in the Algarve and one fan was tragically stabbed to death by a pickpocket in Lisbon. But Charleroi-style riots were absent. The Football Association deserves a pat on the back as well as UK politicians, who devised and implemented contentious travel-ban legislation.

Knee-jerk: The sort of reaction made with dangerous consequences by the French, German and Spanish federations in rushing after a new national coach almost before the dear-departed failure had flown home from Portugal. Marry in haste, repent at leisure (Italy's fault, by contrast, was waiting two years too long to replace Giovanni Trapattoni).

Lesson to learn: Croatia coach Otto Baric set up his side perfectly against France but then forgot to go back to the drawing board to counter England, a very different team. He had the ideal wide-running strikers to launch into the spaces behind Gary Neville and Ashley Cole; he had, in Ivica Mornar, an ideal foil for the aggressive Cole. But Mornar appeared only after the interval and, by that time, the game had drifted beyond the Croats, and Baric was out of a job.

Managers: Blame managers and coaches for needless negativity. I lost count of the number of craven

Headlining act...Czech Republic v Holland

substitutions when coaches replaced a forward with a defender or midfielder to try to sit, vainly, on a lead. No one learned the lesson that, in these days of sharper refereeing (and time-keeping), the defensive mindset spells suicide. Only two coaches made a habit of creative substitutions: Luiz Felipe Scolari and Karel Bruckner – and even Scolari started every match with a lone striker.

New boys: The eclipse of the superstars was, happily, balanced by the rise of a bright new generation. Wayne Rooney was the hit of the first round, and Milan Baros was unrecognisable from the spiritless striker Liverpool fans witnessed last (injury-hit) season. Others for the future were Italy's Antonio Cassano, Spain's Fernando Torres and Germany's Philipp Lahm and Bastian Schweinsteiger.

Otto: Rehhagel started out with a tactical clean sheet before each game and was richly rewarded by making new champions Greece the first nation at a major tournament to beat both hosts and holders.

Pride: Went before the fall for France, yet again, just as it undermined their title defence at the 2002 World Cup. A 100 per cent qualifying record covered many of the cracks but not all. To illustrate French folly: each federation was told by UEFA to provide its own English language translator for protocol and press conferences. Only France felt above that stricture and looked not merely incompetent but silly.

It was the same with team selection. The Czechs could justify a wholesale replacement of players against Germany for a match that did not matter to them; but there was no logic to Jacques Santini's defensive reshuffle against Croatia.

Quality: One-off drama and entertainment (see H) do not necessarily equate to overall excellence and I thought the quality quotient fell below the standard of Euro 2000. No team compared with the France of four years ago.

Referees: The best standard yet at a major finals, with significant value gained from using compatriot referee and assistants. Also, I have yet to be convinced Urs Meier got it right on the Sol Campbell 'goal' for England against Portugal because keeper Ricardo's initial positioning for the corner was so awful. Still, Meier did not deserve the treatment he got from the bad losers among the British tabloids. Swedish referee Anders Frisk continued to inspire mixed reactions – some hated his theatrical flamboyance, others admired the unmistakable clarity of the signals.

Superstars: Most lost their way or their heads, starting with Raul (yet again, never the same player since his appendectomy 15 months ago), Alex Del Piero (betrayed by the legacy of injuries and by a sycophant-fuelled ego which prevents him dropping deeper into midfield) and David Beckham (unrecognisable from the bright young thing who played Greece on his own two and a half years ago). And whatever happened to Thierry Henry, apart from his two-goal vignette against Switzerland?

New promise...Spain's Fernando Torres

Tactical lessons: Few. Tactical evolution nowadays is a matter of minutiae rather than the grand sweeps forward of the 1930s to WM, of the late 1950s to 4-2-4, of the 1970s to 4-4-2. The days of a 3-5-2 basic are long gone. It worked in the heat and altitude of Mexico in 1986 but this was sea-level Europe almost two decades later. Almost everyone employed a standard back four. Occasionally, someone would break the mould and go to three – as the Czechs did to play catch-up on Holland. Greece coach Otto Rehhagel, however, was the only man to make a habit of it, and then only on a horses-for-courses basis to outwit France and the Czechs.

Variations were widespread further forward, depending on the talents of the players available and their managers' fears. Some deployed a single screen (Russia, Greece, Latvia), others a two-man axis (Portugal sometimes, Spain, France) to support two deep-lying wingers (Denmark) or even a three-man chain (Portugal, Czech Republic, Germany) behind a lone striker (Holland, Portugal) or twin strikeforce (Czechs, Spain, Croatia, France). Others went down their own route such as England, with the Famous Four in midfield, Sweden with a diamond, Italy with all manner of self-confusing over-complications and Holland with their game-by-game mix 'n' match.

UEFA: Needs to stop making simple things complicated both in the European Championship and in the Champions League. Goal difference should always be the first standby to split teams level on points. Leagues are not administrative hybrids but represent the totality of competition. That totality must be recognised and prioritised. After goal difference and goals scored etc, then go to head-to-head, coefficients, fair play, corners, average height, shaven heads, etc.

Voller: Top marks for honesty. After losing to the Czechs the German fans jeered Rudi Voller as he walked out to applaud their support. But the coach kept on walking into the valley of disapproval, then spread his arms wide as if to say: "You may not like the result but I tried my best." The jeers turned to sympathetic cheers. Afterwards Voller, not ducking and diving like some of his counterparts, said: "I have a contract to the 2006 World Cup but I am not stupid: a contract is worth nothing without the results to support it, and our results here have not been good enough."

The next day he made it formal, though – aside from minor team or tactical tweaks – it was hard to see how he could have done any better with an average group of players leavened by youngsters (Bastian Schweinsteiger, Philipp Lahm, Lukas Podolski etc) with too much still to learn to save this particular day. Ironically, Voller paid the penalty for having achieved way over the odds and raising expectations too high by taking Germany to the 2002 World Cup Final.

Winners: These are the teams who do not tire. It's losing teams who tire, whose heads go down, whose legs

Signal man...Anders Frisk

Jeers to cheers...Voller gains fan sympathy

cramp up. Teams who have to chase the ball too much through technical or stylistic weaknesses (England, Germany) soon look tired. Teams who are not united psychologically (France, Spain, Italy) look tired. Not winners.

X-rated substitutions: Cost Italy dearly again. Do not blame Sweden and/or Denmark and their 2-2 draw. The *Azzurri* had only themselves to blame for one below-par outing (against Denmark), one scrappy performance (against Bulgaria) and one heaven-and-hell display against Sweden, when they were betrayed (as in Korea in 2002) by coach Giovanni Trapattoni's retreat into the substitute-enshrouded horrors of defensive pre-history.

Yawning: The gap in security with regard to bag checks at stadiums. The disorganisation suggested no one had taken the time or trouble to think the process through. The exercise appeared largely a charade, more for appearance than for effect.

Zero consideration – for fans who attended the games and were treated in a last-century manner. For a start, signs around the stadiums were not up to scratch. Before France v England at Benfica's ground, impatient and baffled supporters even climbed perimeter walls in frustration at a lack of help from both the sign-posting and the poorly-trained stewards. The lessons of Euro 2000 in Belgium and Holland had not been taken on board. This is a logistical 'must' for a big tournament. One day, poor sign-posting will cause serious security problems; UEFA will be totally to blame.

There was further disappointment inside the stadiums for all those who had saved for months to savour the experience: the match was not shown in simultaneous transmission on the video screens. Thus a fan in the bottom right-hand corner of a stand had little chance of following the action in the bottom left-hand corner of the pitch.

Any which way...the sign-posting was poor

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All-star eleven

Gavin Hamilton selects his team of the tournament

GOALKEEPER

PETR CECH
(Czech Republic)
The young Chelsea-bound keeper faced a lot of competition but showed agility and a big-match mentality and had confidence in abundance.
Honorary mentions: Edwin Van der Sar (Holland) – one of the heroes as his side finally came good in a penalty shoot-out; Ricardo (Portugal) – quarter-final spot-kick saviour but at fault for the Final goal; Gianluigi Buffon (Italy) – impressive and gentlemanly; Fabien Barthez (France) – one of the few Frenchmen to emerge with credit.

RIGHT-BACK

GIORGIOS SEITARIDIS
(Greece)
The best right-back in the tournament by a long way. Tight defensively, he also roamed forward to great effect and showed he could switch to a central man-marking role when required.
Honorary mention: Thomas Helveg (Denmark) – for proving that attack can be the best form of defence.

CENTRE-BACKS

RICARDO CARVALHO
(Portugal)
The outstanding defender of the tournament. A centre-back with poise and guts who only came into the Portugal side after Fernando Couto's poor showing in the first half of the opener against Greece.

TRAIANOS DELLAS
(Greece)
Had to include a Greek centre-back, and who better than the man who scored the goal that took his side into the Final? Most memorable moment was his refusal to leave the press conference platform after being given the semi-final man of the match award. He stayed on to listen to Otto Rehhagel and to savour his time in the spotlight.
Honorary mentions: Michalis Kapsis (Greece) – excellent man-marking of Jan Koller in the semi-final; Tomas Ujfalusi (Czech Rep) – tough and accomplished; Alessandro Nesta (Italy) – for reminding us what Italians still do best; Jaap Stam (Holland) – his most impressive performance at international level.

LEFT-BACK

MAREK JANKULOVSKI
(Czech Republic)
A cavalier among roundheads who deserves recognition for his role in the Czech Republic's attacking strategy throughout the tournament. His marauding was one of the highlights for the Czechs, who were technically the best team in the finals.
Honorary mentions: Philipp Lahm (Germany) – one of the few bright points in a dismal side; Ashley Cole (England) – his country's best defender.

RIGHT MIDFIELD

CRISTIANO RONALDO
(Portugal)
Gave a series of performances that were far more accomplished than many expected, outshining his senior colleague Luis Figo and underlining the feeling that this was a tournament where reputations were there to be made and broken.
Honorary mention: Karel Poborsky (Czech Rep), who reminded us that he can still turn it on at the highest level.

DEFENSIVE MIDFIELD

THEO ZAGORAKIS
(Greece)
Captain and driving force of the winners. Hard-working and disciplined throughout, he also demonstrated exceptional creative use of the ball – witness the flick over Bixente Lizarazu and cross for the goal against France in the quarter-final.
Honorary mentions: Costinha (Portugal) – quietly effective for the hosts; Kostas Katsouranis (Greece) – industrious and influential.

CENTRAL MIDFIELD

MANICHE
(Portugal)
To those star names who complained about being tired, there is one word: Maniche. The Porto midfielder played more games than virtually any other player in Europe last season, but was still arguably the outstanding individual of Euro 2004. An all-action all-rounder who picked his side up when their forwards let them down. Scored the goal of the tournament in the semi-final against Holland.
Honorary mentions: Michael Ballack (Germany), who salvaged his flagging reputation; Deco (Portugal) – never scaled the heights reached during Porto's Champions League success but was still a star; Giorgios Karagounis (Greece) – his country's best player but suspended for the Final.

LEFT MIDFIELD

PAVEL NEDVED
(Czech Republic)
Outstanding for the Czechs in their run to the semi-finals, where his importance was underlined when a knee injury forced him out – after that the side lost all sense of purpose and direction.
Honorary mention: Arjen Robben (Holland) – a revelation but ran out of steam, and ideas, in the semi-final.

FORWARDS

RUUD VAN NISTELROOY
(Holland)
Playing in his first major tournament, the Manchester United man confirmed his reputation as one of the outstanding strikers in the world game. Exceptional in an unexceptional Dutch side.

WAYNE ROONEY
(England)
His impact on Euro 2004 was compared to that of Pele on the 1958 World Cup. It was slightly absurd: Rooney's England won't be remembered in the same breath as Pele's Brazil, but the teenager was still the headline-grabber of the group stage. A phenomenon.
Honorary mentions: Milan Baros (Czech Rep) – from Liverpool reserves to top scorer at Euro 2004; Angelos Haristeas (Greece) – ensured of a place in history after his Final winner; Henrik Larsson (Sweden) – a stunning header against Bulgaria; Jon Dahl Tomasson (Denmark) – another stellar performance.

COACH

OTTO REHHAGEL
(Greece)
Who else? The German gave Greece's players the mental strength to believe in the national side after years of neglect. His tactics weren't big but they were clever. Now 65, Rehhagel will be forever remembered as the mastermind behind the greatest upset in the history of international football.
Honorary mentions: Karel Bruckner (Czech Rep) – the wily old dog who showed mid-match tinkering can be successful; Luiz Felipe Scolari (Portugal), who cleverly announced he had agreed a two-year contract extension after the team's semi-final success.

FLOPS XI

Jorg STIEL (Switzerland)

PAULO FERREIRA (Portugal)
Marcel DESAILLY (France)
FERNANDO COUTO (Portugal)
Mickael SILVESTRE (France)

David BECKHAM (England)
Francesco TOTTI (Italy) (c)
Luis FIGO (Portugal)

RAUL (Spain)
PAULETA (Portugal)
Christian VIERI (Italy)

COACH: Jacques SANTINI (France)

Petr Cech
(Czech Rep)
Otto Rehhagel
(Coach, Greece)
Giorgios Seitaridis
(Greece)
Ricardo Carvalho
(Portugal)
Traianos Dellas
(Greece)
Marek Jankulovski
(Czech Rep)
Cristiano Ronaldo
(Portugal)
Theo Zagorakis
(Greece)
Maniche
(Portugal)
Pavel Nedved
(Czech Rep)
Wayne Rooney
(England)
Ruud Van Nistelrooy
(Holland)

Lessons from Portugal

Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson reflects on Euro 2004 and looks forward to the new season in England. Interview by Gavin Hamilton

Which teams have most impressed you at Euro 2004?

Portugal. Losing their first game was maybe the best thing that happened to them because it woke them up, they became aggressive attackers. They became aggressive in their intent in the matches and got the benefit of it in the performances against England, Spain and Holland. Absolutely superb performances. Those three to me have probably been the best of the tournament. The Czech Republic's 3-2 victory against Holland was another one. Then they beat Germany with half the team out, and everyone thought they were certainties. But I quite fancied Greece against them. I thought the Czechs were the type of team who are fine when everything is going well for them, but when confronted with a problem, they don't know what to do. Losing Nedved didn't help. I liked the Czechs. They got up and went at teams, they attacked. I like that. But not all teams have done that.

Attacking teams have done well at this tournament. Is that the way forward?

It's a question not so much of playing style, more the determination of the coach and the players. Some countries are chained by their history. For instance, Holland always play the same way, they never change. You have to have exceptional players to win games and at the moment they have some good players, not exceptional ones. But in fairness they always try to play football.

Did Greece deserve to reach the Final?

There's absolutely no evidence that the wrong teams were in the Final. Greece have beaten the best teams. They've beaten Portugal, they've beaten France and they've beaten the Czech Republic.

What about England? What was the problem against Portugal? People have said English football, and the Premiership in particular, doesn't produce players who can beat their man.

That's entirely possible. When we asked for the winter shutdown and didn't get it, I think it was a vote the FA should have given us. They have to change their mind on that, they're stagnating in terms of progress. The rest does everyone good, it gives coaches a mental rest, it gives players the chance to get over their injuries. It brings back the freshness into the camp. This December we've got nine games – that's a lot of football matches. So you think it'd be a sensible thing to get over that New Year, because there are good crowds at that holiday period, and give the break for the rest of January. It just needs people with vision at the FA.

But it wasn't just England who said they were tired at Euro 2004.

I'm not surprised that players said they were tired. Look at all the games they play in Spain and Italy. Greece were fresh because their players don't play as much. Look at Karagounis, who missed the Final. He only started two games all season. And then the Czechs had Baros, who's not been playing that much at Liverpool.

Have Manchester United got additional problems because of pre-season commitments?

No, that's not a problem. It doesn't matter if we were staying at home or going abroad. Sometimes we go to Sweden or Denmark, sometimes we go to the Far East. We went to America last year and we're going there again this time. The players who played in the European Championship won't be involved anyway.

Do you ever feel commercial pressures when you want to try out certain players and leave out the big names?

No. That would never stop us from playing players. There's no issue with that.

It always seems to be the big contradiction at United – between you as a football man and the business side of things.

No, on that side, it's not an issue.

Shattering blow...the Czechs suffered for the loss of injured captain Nedved

Looking at the football side, Carlos Queiroz is coming back. Is that a big plus for you?

Absolutely, it's terrific to have him back and a big bonus. He's coming back to a place where he's respected, admired and valued.

Was last season a success for you?

There are only three domestic trophies that you can win. The League Cup is never a priority for teams such as ourselves or Arsenal, Liverpool, Chelsea or any of the big teams. The demands are elsewhere, because you've got the Champions League or the UEFA Cup, whichever one you're in. Then you've got the FA Cup and the Premier League. So you've all these top teams vying for these two trophies, the Premier League and the FA Cup. We want to win them. So you can't dismiss them.

Is it a problem switching from the Premiership to the Champions League, in terms of the style of football?

No, it's not a problem for us.

High energy...Karagounis had a quiet season

Your teams have always played attacking football, with pace and with wingers. Does that work in the Champions League for you?

We don't necessarily play attacking football all the time. We sometimes play with three central midfielders, we'll play with two wide and one in the middle, which allows us hopefully to get control of midfield. But the way the game is played in the Champions League has never restricted us in any way, shape or form at any time.

Have you been pleased with the way your players performed at Euro 2004?

I'm delighted that Ronaldo got to the Final with Portugal. He's been fantastic, he's played with a lot of character. Gary Neville's had a terrific tournament. Phil Neville and Nicky Butt didn't get much football – Nicky got injured, which was unfortunate. Scholesy had a really great game against Croatia, Van Nistelrooy's been the star Dutch player, as far as I can see. And Silvestre did really well for France. Saha had only the last 15 minutes against Greece.

Scholes seemed very tired in the quarter-final against Portugal.

I haven't spoken to him yet but I will as soon as we start training again. We'll chat about the way he feels fitness-wise. It's an important issue. It could be tiredness, it could be the long season taking its effect, we don't know. It's more likely to be the long season.

What would you say was an optimum number of games for players?

It's difficult to work out an optimum number, but I know we play too many games at the moment.

As a Scotsman, could you still support England at Euro 2004?

I like to see them do well because we've got players in there. It was difficult when they played France because I had two players in the English team and two in the French team. Overall, though, it's better for our game if England do well.

'I'm not surprised England players weren't the only ones who said they were tired. Look at all the games they play in Spain and Italy. The Greeks were fresh because they don't play as much'

When are Scotland going to come back into the reckoning?

There's no sign of it yet, but Berti Vogts is doing the right thing, he's playing the long-term game and giving young players like James McFadden, Gary Naysmith, Darren Fletcher a chance. There are two or three younger players starting to get the urge. The key is to keep them all together, shape it in the next few years. But at the moment I don't think the team is good enough for Scotland standards. I don't know what's underneath the present group, the Fletchers and McFaddens. There's a few young players emerging, Stephen Pearson at Celtic [the Scottish PFA Young Player of the Year] is one and there's another, the goalkeeper at Celtic, David Marshall. If they break in, emerge and come into the national team along with the Fletchers, McFaddens and Naysmiths, you've got a reasonable nucleus to go forward with.

Far from United...club-mates Ronaldo and Phil Neville clash in Lisbon

New ball game... Sir Alex at Vila Sol

The Scottish fans seem to be passionate about their team despite the poor results.

The fans are passionate about their football, but you can see the passion in this European Championship. That's the one thing that has increased in the last two decades, the fans' passion for the game. There's tribalism and they are all done up in war paint. I definitely think they are more passionate nowadays.

Sir Alex Ferguson was speaking at the Sir Bobby Robson Golf Classic at Vila Sol Spa & Golf Resort

Losing out...Cassano, substituted against Sweden, then scored the winner against Bulgaria, only to find it was not enough to put Italy through

The national teams from the countries of Europe's 'Big Five' leagues were Euro 2004's biggest casualties. They were left to contemplate their early exits against the changing landscape of the European game

Home before the postcards

ITALY

Old habits die hard

Quite simply, you cannot teach an old dog new tricks. Previewing Italy's Euro 2004 prospects, I suggested that coach Giovanni Trapattoni would have learned from the mistakes made at the 2002 World Cup, arguing that this time he would adopt a more positive, attacking approach.

I was wrong. It was in the 70th minute of Italy's 1-1 draw with Sweden that I realised my error. It was then that Trapattoni opted to take off Italy's most dangerous player, striker Antonio Cassano, replacing him with midfielder Stefano Fiore, at a time when Italy were leading 1-0. Immediately the mind went back two years, to the second-round game against South Korea and the 60th-minute substitution of Alessandro Del Piero by midfielder Gennaro Gattuso. The effect of both substitutions was identical – coach Trapattoni offered his opponents a huge psychological boost, surrendering the initiative before being done in by a late equaliser.

The Old Dog had learned nothing. Italy were on their way out of the tournament and Trapattoni on his way out of a job, being replaced by former Juventus coach Marcello Lippi within the week.

Trapattoni's substitutions against Sweden were the product of a classic, outdated Italian reading of the game. We are 1-0 up, let us defend what we have got. Substitutions in themselves at that critical stage of the game were entirely justified, but why take off your best player? Why compound the error by replacing a striker with a midfielder and then replace a midfielder, the injured Gattuso, with a defender (Giuseppe Favalli)?

These changes were perhaps the most obvious mistakes in a Euro 2004 campaign in which the performances of Cassano sounded the only positive note.

Trapattoni went to Portugal determined to field the side that won Italy's qualifying group, relying above all on the Totti-Del Piero-Vieri trio in attack.

Francesco Totti's spitting incident against Denmark put him out of the reckoning almost immediately. Christian Vieri arrived at the tournament with an injured left knee and performed like an arthritic yak. Alex Del Piero is simply burnt out, a player long past his sell-by date. Plan A was out the window.

So where was Plan B? Even accepting Trapattoni's explanation that Alberto Gilardino, scorer of 23 Serie A goals for Parma last season, had blossomed too late to be given a pre-tournament try out, what about those strikers already blooded by the coach? Surely Serie A form argued that Cassano, not Del Piero, should have started in the opening game against Denmark? Surely more room should have been found for the speedy Marco Di Vaio, especially as an attacking substitute against Sweden? Surely, given the omission of Filippo Inzaghi,

there was room in the squad, if not for Gilardino, then at least for Antonio Di Natale and Fabrizio Miccoli?

One of the lessons of Euro 2004 would seem to be that the classic Italian defensive, percentage game no longer works at the top level (especially when tried by others such as England). Another lesson was that coaches who have the courage to make space for younger players will be rewarded. It remains to be seen if Lippi has taken heed.

Looking forward to Germany 2006, it may be time to definitively drop Del Piero and Vieri (but not Totti) and look to younger players, such as Cassano, Gilardino, Miccoli, Di Natale and Giuseppe Sculli in attack, Enzo Maresca, Daniele De Rossi and Gaetano D'Agostino in midfield, and Daniele Bonera and Matteo Ferrari in defence.

Lippi is a hugely successful coach – five Serie A titles, one Champions League trophy – and has shown himself to be intelligent, innovative and competitive. He will need all those qualities and more to get Italy back on the winning road.

Paddy Agnew

GERMANY

Rudi walks away

The party's over. Just two years after being serenaded by thousands of fans in Frankfurt city centre for leading Germany to runners-up spot at the 2002 World Cup, Rudi Voller was prompted to resign as national team coach by his side's inability to progress beyond the group stage of Euro 2004.

Voller's immediate reaction to the 2-1 defeat by the Czech Republic that sealed Germany's fate was to insist he would carry on. But within hours the defiance had evaporated. Voller was walking away.

Too much baggage...Voller

"I know it's over for me," said the visibly drained coach, who had, it emerged, been up half the night discussing his future with German League president Werner Hackmann. "With the 2006 World Cup being held in our own land, my feeling is that only someone who is untarnished, who doesn't come with the baggage of a European Championship humiliation, can take us forward. We need someone with credibility. I had it when I started in this job four years ago. But I don't have it any longer.

"I'm not going to blame my boys. At the highest level it's sometimes difficult. We were close in all three games but in the end we just didn't have enough."

Despite his team failing to win a game in Portugal, Voller was not under immense pressure to throw in the towel. While the German press heavily criticised his ever-changing tactics – 4-5-1 against Holland, 4-4-2 against Latvia and 3-6-1 in the Czech defeat – and for using only one true striker, he was spared the sort of virulent personal attacks that felled predecessors Berti Vogts and Erich Ribbeck because of his status as one of the country's all-time great goalscorers and his success at the last World Cup.

Moreover, many high-profile figures in the German game such as new Bayern Munich boss Felix Magath and Werder Bremen general manager Klaus Allofs would have been perfectly happy for Voller to stay. They accepted that Germany's display in the goalless draw with Latvia was not on but pointed out a well-organised and combative *Nationalmannschaft* had dominated for long periods in the 1-1 draw with Holland and made more than enough chances to prevail against the Czechs. "It's not down to Rudi Voller that we have a visible lack of international class attackers," said Magath.

However, the proud Voller had no intention of limping on. "I would have loved to be in charge for the 2006 World Cup. You have to be very egotistical in this business. But in my case, it was simply not on," he said.

Ex-Bayern Munich coach Ottmar Hitzfeld was the overwhelming candidate to replace Voller, but surprised everybody by spurning the federation's advances.

Other names in the frame include Otto Rehhagel, after his exploits with Greece, and Christoph Daum, currently at Fenerbahce in Turkey, though he still has some penance to serve following the failed drugs test that cost him the national team job four years ago. Talk of Giovanni Trapattoni or Lothar Matthaus stepping into the breach was pure fantasy.

It promises to be an interesting summer.

Nick Bidwell

FRANCE

End of an era

It was a sad end for the golden generation. While the disastrous first-round exit at the 2002 World Cup looked bad on paper, what happened in Portugal was in fact far worse.

Consider the evidence. The entire first 90 minutes of the opening game against England were overshadowed by the genius of Zinedine Zidane in second-half injury time; France equalised against Croatia after a clear handball by David Trezeguet in the run-up to his goal; and for more than 75 minutes France struggled to find the solution to overcome a poor Swiss team. So when Greece arrived in the quarter-finals, a trauma was not far away.

'We need someone with credibility to take us forward. I had it when I started in this job four years ago. But I don't have it any longer'

Rudi Voller

Chemistry upset...Zidane and Henry failed to gel

How do we explain the failure? First and foremost, the coaching. Jacques Santini, who has now left to take over at Tottenham, was never clear on his preferred line-up in defence, changing the back four seven times in his last nine games. He never accepted the need to drop Trezeguet and Mickael Silvestre from the team during the tournament, despite their poor performances. And he never gave a proper chance to the new generation – Jerome Rothen, Louis Saha, Benoit Pedretti.

Then there were the tactics. The 4-4-2 system was far too predictable. Opponents knew how to cope with it. It was an individual talent, Zidane, who made the difference against England. But you cannot win a major competition just by relying on individuals.

Obviously, the defence, in its many incarnations, didn't work well together. In midfield Claude Makelele failed to contribute anything constructive to the attacking play. Zidane, playing wide left, then in the centre, then wide right, never fitted into the system and never struck up a working relationship with Thierry Henry. It's unbelievable, but Zidane did not provide a single decisive pass to the Arsenal forward in the entire tournament.

Two years ago in Korea, the team was in poor shape physically. There had been a number of demanding away matches, against Australia and Chile, and players like Zidane had crucial games with their clubs right until the end of the season. That was not the case this year. According to team doctor Jean-Marcel Ferret, all the players were fit. But, crucially, they were two years older. Many first-choice players – Fabien Barthez, Lilian Thuram, Bixente Lizarazu, Makelele, Zidane – are the wrong side of 30.

There were also tensions in the camp. It seems Henry and Zidane struggled to get on, not because of any clash of egos but because Henry wanted to play the same kind of football he is used to with Arsenal. And he felt Zidane did not bring enough pace to France's game.

So will the team be built around Zidane or around Henry? Santini's successor – the two front-runners when we went to press were Laurent Blanc and Jean Tigana – will have to make a tough decision, or find a tactical solution that can accommodate the two big stars effectively.

Erik Bielderman

'I want our players to live for the national team, like the Brazilians and Argentinians do'
New Spain coach Luis Aragones

Off form...Raul

SPAIN

Saez takes the rap

"Spain have this thing of quarter-finals and out; hopefully, this time we can go beyond that." So said Iker Casillas, Ivan Helguera and countless others on the eve of Euro 2004.

Oh dear. Spain may not have fallen at the usual hurdle, but only because they didn't even reach it. Instead, they re-crossed the border with their tails wedged firmly between their legs, having blown it. Again. And everyone agreed that the man who had to pay was coach Inaki Saez.

Once again Spain displayed the failings that had forced them into a play-off against Norway to even qualify: not only did they have a soft underbelly but also, more importantly, they didn't score enough goals; they couldn't make possession count, nor finish teams off. This was a ludicrous failing for a squad with such attacking talent, but two measly goals in three matches say it all.

Spain lacked thrust, and Saez, faithful as ever to his 4-2-3-1 formation, to captain Raul (despite his appalling form), and a defensive midfield pairing, never found a way to accommodate Juan Carlos Valeron, the one man with subtlety and vision through the middle. Nor did the coach fully back the country's creative talents.

Saez, the press moaned, was too stubborn, too rigid. And yet he was also too weak, too accommodating, not daring to drop Raul – perhaps because he would have been pilloried – and accepting criticisms with good grace, thus merely encouraging more.

The side that faced Portugal, with Joaquin, Xabi Alonso and Fernando Torres drafted in, was the side that sports daily *Marca* demanded, and still Spain went out. Saez couldn't win.

Not that he helped himself. There was a conservatism about Spain (underlined by Jose Antonio Reyes' absence from the squad) and a sense that Spain never really went for it. Perhaps they never quite believed they could win or, worse still, never even wanted to.

Old demons were awoken: nobody cares about the team, complained the press; Saez has no fire, no passion; there's no identity, no commitment, no sense of Spain's footballing identity.

Everyone agreed – Saez had to go. But the surprise was that everyone agreed on his successor, too: 66-year-old Luis Aragones, a veteran of 26 seasons, known as the Wise Man of Hortaleza. Even the federation agreed but, true to form, still took a week to agree that they agreed.

"What we need is consensus, everyone to agree on what Spain is all about; we need to know what we are playing at. What's missing is mentality. I want our players to live for the national team, like the Brazilians and Argentinians do," said Aragones on his appointment. "The fans have to believe in Spain, to see Spain as their team. Then the players have to be fully committed; putting on the Spain shirt should be the peak for them," he added – and it says much about the place of the national team that such a hope even needed to be expressed.

Everyone was happy, the eulogies poured in, with desire endlessly cited as the new manager's most important contribution to Spain – a contribution considered vital in the aftermath of Spain's lacklustre capitulation.

Spain didn't care; now they will. One reason Aragones got the job, according to federation president Angel Maria Villar Llona, was that he "really, really wanted it". It was the third time he'd been offered the post, and Aragones was delighted to be able to accept at long last.

But is that really enough? Aragones is a motivator who demands the very best from everyone, from whom players always claim to have learnt much, a man footballers dare not let down, whom journalists dare not question. But his record is actually rather discreet – one League title and four Cups in 26 seasons.

Nor is he the most orthodox of managers. His decisions can be bizarre, his behaviour even more so (he once took a pair of pliers to a television cable because it ran suspiciously close to his dugout) and he is famous for a million harangues. Like the time he physically attacked Cameroon striker Samuel Eto'o, the occasion his false teeth escaped as he furiously barked orders, or when he told one footballer to "bloody well get on with it, there's nothing wrong with you". The player had a broken jaw.

Perhaps that's what Spain's players need – drive and passion, order and discipline, *cojones*. Aragones could be the man to finally take Spain to the top. But wherever he takes them, it's likely to be quite a ride.

Sid Lowe

ENGLAND

Youthful promise hides faults

Of the Big Five heading home earlier than expected England can, on reflection, be most satisfied with their performance. There was no shame in losing to Portugal on penalties, even if certain sections of the English media disgraced themselves with their hounding of Swiss referee Urs Meier for disallowing Sol Campbell's goal in the final minute of regular time. An England victory then would have been undeserved and unfair on Portugal.

"The players did themselves justice,"

Time on their side...Lampard and Gerrard

said coach Sven Goran Eriksson. "They lost on penalties after extra-time and they should be proud of themselves, and I hope the fans are proud of them. It will take more than 24 hours to get over it; losing like we did is extremely hard.

"We lost against Brazil two years ago and they went on to win the World Cup. Here, against France, we should have won that game and we did some stupid mistakes. The difference between winning and losing is almost nothing, and hopefully we will have a little more luck in the future."

That future looks bright simply because of the explosive emergence of Wayne Rooney. The Everton teenager was the revelation of the tournament and his injury, halfway through the first half of the quarter-final against Portugal, was a serious, probably terminal, blow.

Also on the plus side were the performances of the defence, particularly full-backs Ashley Cole and Gary Neville and much-maligned keeper David James.

With the likes of Rooney, Cole, Frank Lampard, Steven Gerrard, John Terry and Michael Owen (who maintained his record of scoring in major tournaments), the core of the side will still be young in two years' time at the next World Cup – presuming they get there.

On the negative side, Eriksson's tactics must be called into question, particularly his substitutions. The Swede is a naturally cautious coach, but the lesson of this tournament was that the bold attacking approach paid off for coaches who were prepared to gamble.

The suspicion remains that England's inability to keep possession, combined with a failure to produce players who can beat their man, will continue to haunt them for many years.

Michel Platini blames the Bosman ruling for the failure of the 'Big Five'. But while that helps to explain the lack of homegrown wingers – why bother nurturing your own when you can buy in an Arjen Robben or a Cristiano Ronaldo? – it does not explain the problems caused by the crash-bang-wallop style of the Premiership when the players shift to the international stage.

What does the future hold? Eriksson, on £4 million a year, will stay. The simple fact is that the FA cannot afford to pay him off. "I have no other plans and there is a world championship in two years' time," said the coach. "I want to stay if it is the wish of the English people and of the FA."

Nor are any player retirements likely, though David Beckham, Paul Scholes, Gary Neville, Nicky Butt and Sol Campbell will be the wrong side of 30 in Germany.

Eriksson's next challenge will be to blood then integrate youngsters like Shaun Wright-Phillips, Jermain Defoe, Paul Robinson and Chris Kirkland.

But the biggest challenge of all will be to dampen the absurdly optimistic pressures for England success. The media and the commercial sector now have such a strong financial interest in England success that many lost their grip on reality in the build-up to the tournament. England always expects, but too many people expected too much from Portugal 2004.

Gavin Hamilton

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That's my boy...Portugal's Nuno Gomes is mobbed by his team-mates after scoring the winner against Spain

Hosts change for the better

Portugal finish top after switching to an FC Porto spine

A SHOCK DEFEAT by Greece in the tournament's opening match left Portugal in danger of becoming only the second European Championship hosts, after Belgium in 2000, to fail to reach the quarter-finals. But after a morale-reviving win over Russia, disaster for the Portuguese – and the tournament as a whole – was averted when Luiz Felipe Scolari's side beat Spain in their last group game to finish top. The result sent Spain tumbling out of the competition, and it was unfancied Greece, superbly marshalled by German coach Otto Rehhagel, who took second place.

For Scolari, the defeat by Greece was a blessing in disguise, giving him the chance to drop underperforming veterans Rui Costa and Fernando Couto, and replace them with the Porto pair of Deco and Ricardo Carvalho. Indeed, the Champions League holders provided the spine of the Portuguese side in the second and third group matches, with Maniche and Costinha providing a steely edge to midfield that was lacking in previous tournaments.

Scolari had been reluctant to make such changes in warm-up friendlies, but the time spent with players immediately before the finals had forced him to confront some home truths. "Those 20 days were the first time I had the chance to spend a long time with the team," said the coach. "It was like going out with a girlfriend for five or six years, getting married and splitting up one week later. You sleep together, wake up and then you see what she looks like first thing in the morning – really quite ugly."

'Perhaps I will be allowed to drive in the bus lanes'

Successful Greece coach Otto Rehhagel contemplates a reward once he gets back to the traffic-choked streets of Athens

The Spanish had been held to a draw by Greece in their second game after starting confidently with a 1-0 win against Russia. And when they needed to show their mettle against the Portuguese, they were a huge disappointment. Coach Inaki Saez attempted to explain another Spanish failure, saying: "It's nothing we can rectify by flicking a switch. We just didn't score goals."

Greece scored more goals than most expected – they had topped their qualifying group, ahead of Spain, with just eight goals in eight games – but it was their defence and midfield organisation that took them through to their first-ever major tournament quarter-final, despite losing their last game to Russia. Following his team's progress, coach Rehhagel said: "We had an extraordinary qualifying campaign, and when I walk the streets of Athens, people stop to shake my hand. Perhaps I will now be the only man allowed to drive in the bus lanes."

After defeats in their first two games, Russia had become the first team to exit the finals. Internal disputes, notably when Alexander Mostovoi was sent home for criticising the tactics of coach Georgi Yartsev, proved their undoing.

Gavin Hamilton

June 12

PORTUGAL 1 GREECE 2

Scolari's men sink on maiden voyage

Portugal became the first hosts to lose the opening match of a European Championship finals after a mistake-ridden performance against group outsiders Greece in Porto.

After an opening ceremony that emphasised Portugal's nautical heritage, the hosts were all at sea against the Greeks. The visitors could not believe their luck at being presented with the opening goal after seven minutes, and further Portuguese errors early in the second half led to a second Greek goal. With that, Portuguese hopes of an opening victory disappeared.

As they took to the pitch at the magnificent new home of FC Porto, Portugal should have been buoyed by the club's recent Champions League triumph. But coach Luiz Felipe Scolari chose to leave Deco, Porto's star in the Final against Monaco, on the bench, preferring the experienced Rui Costa in the central attacking midfield role.

And while Porto had played high-tempo, confident football during their Champions League campaign, Portugal were nervous from the outset. Facing huge expectations from the home crowd, they played like a team who had been playing only friendlies for the past two years.

Greece's defence-minded formation did not bode well, but they were handed the first goal when Paulo Ferreira, hailed as the best right-back in Europe after his exploits with Porto, played the ball straight to Giorgios Karagounis. The Internazionale midfielder, suddenly finding himself with time and space, strode forward and struck a low shot from the edge of the area inside the right post of outstretched keeper Ricardo.

Portugal, already jittery, were now rattled. Further mistakes by Jorge Andrade and Rui Jorge went unpunished as Angelos Haristeas and Zissis Vryzas sent chances high and wide.

Portugal did create some opportunities, mostly through Luis Figo, but Rui Costa put a free header wide and Greece keeper Antonis Nikopolidis rushed out to claim at the feet of Simao Sabrosa.

Deco and Cristiano Ronaldo – half-time substitutes for Rui Costa and Simao, respectively – made Portugal more of a threat. But any potential advantage was snuffed out in the 51st minute when Ronaldo, who had lost the ball, tripped Giorgios Seitaridis in the penalty area. Angelos Basinas converted the spot-kick to put the Greeks 2-0 ahead.

Figo, Deco and Ronaldo worked hard to create openings but Pauleta could not provide the finishing touch. Ronaldo did score with a header in stoppage time but by then he had five times got into a strong position

RESULTS

Portugal 1	Greece 2	Russia 0	Portugal 2
Spain 1	Russia 0	Spain 0	Portugal 1
Greece 1	Spain 1	Russia 2	Greece 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Portugal	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
Greece	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Spain	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Russia	3	1	0	2	2	4	3

Sandwiched...Vryzas of Greece v Portugal

only to deliver a cross to a non-existent team-mate at the far post.

Scolari admitted Portugal faced an uphill struggle. "Greece took total profit from our mistakes," he said. "The next game will almost be a matter of life and death."

Gavin Hamilton

June 12

SPAIN 1 RUSSIA 0

Valeron's instant impact

Spain provided their travelling fans with the pleasant surprise of a victory. That they scored only once was neither here nor there. The point was that the Spanish, notorious underachievers at major finals, had made a positive start.

Russia appeared resigned to defeat from the outset, their line-up – an ultra-defensive formation with four at the back, a screen in Evgeni Aldonin, then a four-man midfield – betraying a lack of confidence and belief.

Spain's preparations had been disrupted when Real Madrid right-back Michel Salgado was ruled out of the finals after suffering a muscle tear. To cover his absence, coach Inaki Saez contentiously decided to switch Carles Puyol out of the heart of defence. Equally contentiously, he omitted Juan Carlos Valeron from midfield amid speculation about the Deportivo La Coruna playmaker's reported inability to play effectively in partnership with Raul.

The longer Spain went on without scoring, the louder grew the fans' demands for Valeron's appearance. But Saez was not going to give in too soon.

Raul went close with a second-minute cross-shot, while, in the countdown to half-time, Vicente, Fernando Morientes and Joseba Etxeberria all kept Russian keeper Sergei Ovchinnikov on his toes.

Russia had little to offer but vigorous tackling and harrying, which drew six yellow cards. Two of them went to central defender Roman Sharonov, who duly became the first player sent off in the finals.

Some 14 minutes into the second half Saez pulled off Morientes, pushed Raul up front and sent on Valeron in midfield. His reward was almost instant. Puyol crossed from the right through a forest of legs, and Valeron coolly took all the time he needed to control the ball, step to the left and then drive a low shot past Ovchinnikov.

Raul, Vicente and Fernando Torres might have increased the lead, while Russia sent on Dmitri Sychev much too late to inflict any damage. In the World Cup two years ago Sychev had scored on each of his appearances as a substitute, but this time the magic had faded – and, with it, whatever hopes Russia ever held of making an impression on the finals.

The ramifications of defeat were intense and prolonged. The following day, playmaker Alexander Mostovoi publicly criticised the strategy and team selection of manager Georgi Yartsev and was duly sent home. Dmitri Alenichev, one of Porto's Champions League-winning heroes, echoed Mostovoi's criticisms. Presumably, by then, Russia could not afford to trim their squad any further.

Keir Radnedge

Shooting star...Valeron scores Spain's winner against Russia

Critic...Mostovoi

SIDELINES

● Alexander Mostovoi was sent home from the Russian camp after criticising the strenuous training regime of coach Georgi Yartsev in a Spanish newspaper. But the midfielder later defended his comments, claiming: "I only said what everyone else was thinking – that we always make the same mistakes when we come to big tournaments."

June 16

GREECE 1 SPAIN 1

Spain pay for Raul's missed sitter

Raul admitted to being "a little" surprised at being named the official man of the match of this game, and rightly so. The Real Madrid forward did set up Fernando Morientes for Spain's goal with a delightful backheel. But had Raul not missed a simple header 10 minutes into the second half, Spain would have been on their way to a comfortable win.

Instead, Greece rallied and hit back with an equaliser from Angelos Haristeas, which, while not entirely deserved, was not entirely unexpected.

Raul had been identified as Spain's danger man by Greece's defence-minded coach Otto Rehhagel. The German made one change from the team that had beaten Portugal in the opening game, bringing in Kostas Katsouranis to man-mark Raul and leaving Traianos Dellas as the spare man at the back.

Katsouranis was booked for tripping Raul after just seven minutes. But Spain's forwards failed to take advantage of this and their numerical superiority in midfield, where David Albelda and Ruben Baraja controlled the centre and Vicente and Joseba Etxeberria were a constant danger on the flanks.

Spain's goal came from their only shot on target in the first half. Raul pounced on a loose ball on the left flank, ran into the area and fooled Katsouranis by backheeling it to Morientes, who checked and thumped his shot past keeper Antonis Nikopolidis.

And that, apart from five bookings, was that in the first 45 minutes.

Spain perked up after the arrival of Joaquin, a half-time substitute for Etxeberria. The Betis winger opened up the right flank on a number of occasions, and it was from his cross that Raul inexplicably headed wide with time and space to place his header. Joaquin continued to create openings, but his team-mates could not provide the finish.

Meanwhile, Greece had shown glimpses of what was to come, notably through captain Theo Zagorakis. After another Spanish attack broke down, substitute Vassilis Tsiartas played a long crossfield pass from the right wing to Spain's back post. Ivan Helguera and Carles Puyol failed to clear the danger, and the ball fell to Haristeas, who chested it down and fired through the legs of keeper Iker Casillas.

Saez was the more disappointed of the two coaches afterwards. "Greece caught us unguarded with a goal on the counter-attack," he said. But he refused to single out Raul for his missed header, saying: "It would be trivial to blame one person."

"Spain played better," conceded Rehhagel, "but we will enjoy the result."

Gavin Hamilton

GROUP A

Early joy...Maniche after putting Portugal ahead against Russia

June 16

RUSSIA 0 PORTUGAL 2

Maniche settles the nerves

In light of the hosts' 2-1 opening match defeat by Greece, coach Luiz Felipe Scolari not surprisingly rang the changes against Russia. Full-backs Rui Jorge and Paulo Ferreira, central defender and captain Fernando Couto, and midfield playmaker Rui Costa were all dropped, being replaced by, respectively, Nuno Valente, Miguel, Ricardo Carvalho and Deco.

The new players added movement and pace but, in truth, the thing that helped the Portuguese most was the seventh-minute goal from midfielder Maniche.

Where the host nation had started nervously in their opening match, this time Dame Fortune smiled on them with an early goal that did much to steady their badly frayed nerves.

It was Portugal's best player, Deco, who set the show rolling when winning a ball out on the right and then making good ground before rattling in a low pass to his Porto team-mate Maniche. The latter did well with his first touch before turning to knock the ball past keeper Sergei Ovchinnikov.

But although Portugal continued to dominate, they had nothing more to show for their efforts until just before half-time. With 45 minutes on the clock, the Russian defence was caught out by a long through ball aimed at front man Pauleta. Ovchinnikov won the race to the ball, going down on it with his body on the edge of the area. However, the keeper's momentum carried him out of the area, and as he slid along the pitch, he appeared to handle the ball. Despite strong protests, Norwegian referee Terje Hauge had no hesitation in sending off Ovchinnikov.

Afterwards, Russia coach Georgi Yartsev complained that this incident marked the definitive turning point in the game. Perhaps it did, yet Portugal made hard work of making the most of their numerical advantage in a second-half performance that betrayed the shaky state of their nerves.

Russia's Andrei Karyaka, Marat Izmailov, Alexander Kerzhakov and speedy substitute Vladimir Bystrov all caused the Portuguese problems before two of Portugal's substitutes wrapped up the game. With two minutes to play, Rui Costa and Cristiano Ronaldo worked a delicious one-two, the Milan veteran finishing crisply – and thereby also putting Russia out of the tournament.

Paddy Agnew

June 20

SPAIN 0 PORTUGAL 1

Nuno Gomes continues the fight

Portugal had never beaten Spain in a competitive match, and it was 23 years since their last friendly victory over their Iberian neighbours. But in a ferocious atmosphere in Lisbon, the hosts turned in a fighting performance to qualify for the quarter-finals as group winners; Spain slunk home to face the music after yet another tournament ended in disappointment.

Portugal went into the game needing to win to progress to the knockout stages, while a draw would have sufficed for Spain. Both countries played the youth card – Portugal naming teenager Cristiano Ronaldo in their starting line-up and Spain opting for 20-year-old striker Fernando Torres, in place of Fernando Morientes, and 22-year-old winger Joaquin. But it was the hosts who were the more ambitious and determined.

"We had fighting spirit," said coach Luiz Felipe Scolari afterwards, and his side deserved their victory, which came thanks to substitute Nuno Gomes's 57th-minute goal.

Torres, quick, skilful and muscular, looked capable of providing a cutting edge for Spain, but he did not receive proper service, from midfield or from the ineffective Raul.

There were few clear chances, though there was plenty of entertaining football in a first half charged with nervous energy. Portugal, aware of their attacking responsibilities, took the game to Spain, with Ronaldo and Luis Figo particularly effective on the flanks. Right-back Miguel saw his shot pawed away by Iker Casillas, while Ronaldo somehow put a clear header wide on the stroke of half-time.

Scolari replaced front man Pauleta with Nuno Gomes for the second half because he "wanted more movement in attack". He got that and more, with the Benfica striker outmanoeuvring Juanito on the edge of the box before dispatching a low shot past Casillas for the goal. Torres had Spain's best chance five minutes later but, through on goal, saw his shot bounce off a post.

The subsequent Portuguese substitutes – Petit for Figo, Fernando Couto for Ronaldo – raised fears that Scolari was risking his team's place in the quarter-finals by trying to defend the lead. But there was no need to worry.

SIDELINES

● A Russian fan who was arrested and later released after running on to the pitch during the match with Portugal was identified as well-known TV presenter Otar Kushinashvili. He took to the field after being enraged by the sending-off of Russian keeper Sergei Ovchinnikov.

Teamwork...Portugal's Nuno Valente and keeper Ricardo combine to deny Raul of Spain

While the Spanish launched increasingly desperate attacks, Morientes – on as a third striker – and the hugely disappointing Raul failed to live up to their reputations.

Portugal even had chances to extend their lead in the final moments. Costinha ballooned a free header over from six yards, then Maniche sped past Casillas, only to see his shot cleared off the line by Raul Bravo, who clattered into a post afterwards.

"It would have been enough to win half-nil," said Scolari, "but we'll settle for one-nil."

Gavin Hamilton

June 20

RUSSIA 2 GREECE 1

Greeks squeak through

The Greece bandwagon, carefully steered by German coach Otto Rehhagel, rolled on to an improbable quarter-final despite a defeat by Russia, who had already been knocked out of the competition.

Russia coach Georgi Yartsev had modest hopes against Greece. "I just hope we finish the game with 11 players," he said, referring to the fact his side had had a man sent off in each of the first two games.

But, having made seven changes to his starting line-up from the team that had lost to Portugal, he was rewarded with a dream start. Striker Dmitri Kirichenko, playing his first match of the tournament, scored the fastest goal in the tournament's history when taking advantage of a lapse in concentration in the Greek defence after 65 seconds.

Russia doubled their lead on 17 minutes when Dmitri Bulykin powered home a header from Rolan Gusev's corner.

Greece were without injured midfielder Stelios Giannakopoulos and the suspended Giorgios Karagounis but they pulled a goal back two minutes before half-time when striker Zissis Vryzas chipped over goalkeeper Viacheslav Malafeev after Dimitrios Papadopoulos headed the ball into his path.

But Russia remained the stronger team and came close to a third goal two minutes from the end when defender Alexei Bugaev flashed a shot across the face of goal.

Although Greece lost, Vryzas's goal was to prove crucial in sending his team into the last eight. It meant they had scored more goals than Spain, with whom they were tied on points, head-to-head record and goal difference.

Greece's narrow escape from elimination was summed up by midfielder Vassilis Tsiartas when saying: "We knocked on the door of hell; luckily, no one was there."

As for the Russians, they at least broke their nine-game winless streak at the European Championship finals, stretching back to 1988.

John Holmesdale

Nettled...Rehhagel

SIDELINES

● Greece coach Otto Rehhagel made an extraordinary attack on UEFA following his team's draw with Spain...for using black goal nets. "They are an absolute catastrophe and could only be the work of some bureaucrat and not some footballer," said the German. "Fans want to see the ball go into the nets, white nets, like at Wembley. Not these ugly black ones. This is not an event where we should mourn, this is a celebration, and that is all I have to say on this."

June 12 - Porto (Dragao)

Portugal 1 (Cristiano Ronaldo 90)
Greece 2 (Karagounis 7, Basinas pen 51)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 48,761. **Ref:** Collina (Ita)

Portugal (4-2-3-1): Ricardo - Paulo Ferreira, Jorge Andrade, Fernando Couto (c), Rui Jorge - Maniche, Costinha (Nuno Gomes 66) - Figo, Rui Costa (Deco 46), Simao (Cristiano Ronaldo 46) - Pauleta.
Booked: Costinha, Pauleta.

Greece (4-4-2): Nikopolidis - Seitaridis, Dellas, Kapsis, Fissas - Karagounis (Katsouranis 46), Zagorakis (c), Basinas, Giannakopoulos (Nikolaidis 68) - Haristeas (Lakis 74), Vryzas.
Booked: Karagounis, Seitaridis.

June 12 - Faro-Loule

Spain 1 (Valeron 60)
Russia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 28,100. **Ref:** Meier (Swi)

Spain (4-2-3-1): Casillas - Puyol, Ivan Helguera, Marchena, Raul Bravo - Albelda, Baraja (Xabi Alonso 59) - Etxeberria, Raul (c) (Fernando Torres 78), Vicente - Morientes (Valeron 59).
Booked: Baraja, Marchena, Albelda.

Russia (4-1-4-1): Ovchinnikov - Evseev, Smertin (c), Sharonov, Sennikov - Aldonin (Sychev 68) - Gusev (Radimov 46), Alenichev, Mostovoi, Izmailov (Karyaka 74) - Bulykin.
Booked: Gusev, Sharonov x 2, Smertin, Aldonin, Radimov.
Sent off: Sharonov 88min.

June 16 - Porto (Bessa)

Greece 1 (Haristeas 66)
Spain 1 (Morientes 28)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 25,444. **Ref:** Michel (Slk)

Greece (4-4-2): Nikopolidis - Seitaridis, Dellas, Kapsis, Fissas (Venetidis 86) - Karagounis (Tsiartas 53), Zagorakis (c), Katsouranis, Giannakopoulos (Nikolaidis 49) - Haristeas, Vryzas.
Booked: Katsouranis, Giannakopoulos, Karagounis, Zagorakis, Vryzas.

Spain (4-2-3-1): Casillas - Puyol, Ivan Helguera, Marchena, Raul Bravo - Albelda, Baraja - Etxeberria (Joaquin 46), Raul (c) (Fernando Torres 80), Vicente - Morientes (Valeron 65).
Booked: Marchena, Ivan Helguera.

June 16 - Lisbon (Luz)

Russia 0
Portugal 2 (Maniche 7, Rui Costa 89)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 55,000. **Ref:** Hauge (Nor)

Russia (4-1-4-1): Ovchinnikov - Evseev, Smertin (c), Bugaev, Sennikov - Aldonin (Malafeev 45) - Alenichev, Loskov, Izmailov (Bystrov 72), Karyaka (Bulykin 79) - Kerzhakov.
Booked: Smertin, Evseev, Alenichev.
Sent off: Ovchinnikov 45min.

Portugal (4-2-3-1): Ricardo - Miguel, Jorge Andrade, Ricardo Carvalho, Nuno Valente - Maniche, Costinha - Simao (Rui Costa 63), Deco, Figo (c) (Cristiano Ronaldo 78) - Pauleta (Nuno Gomes 57).
Booked: Ricardo Carvalho, Deco.

June 20 - Lisbon (Jose Alvalade)

Spain 0
Portugal 1 (Nuno Gomes 57)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 52,000. **Ref:** Frisk (Swe)

Spain (4-2-3-1): Casillas - Puyol, Ivan Helguera, Juanito (Morientes 80), Raul Bravo - Xabi Alonso, Albelda (Baraja 66) - Joaquin (Luque 72), Raul (c), Vicente - Fernando Torres.
Booked: Albelda, Juanito, Puyol.

Portugal (4-2-3-1): Ricardo - Miguel, Jorge Andrade, Ricardo Carvalho, Nuno Valente - Costinha, Maniche - Figo (c) (Petit 78), Deco, Cristiano Ronaldo (Fernando Couto 85) - Pauleta (Nuno Gomes 46).
Booked: Pauleta, Nuno Gomes.

June 20 - Faro-Loule

Russia 2 (Kirichenko 2, Bulykin 17)
Greece 1 (Vryzas 43)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 24,000. **Ref:** Veissiere (Fra)

Russia (4-4-2): Malafeev - Anyukov, Sharonov (Sennikov 56), Bugaev, Evseev - Gusev, Alenichev (c), Radimov, Karyaka (Semshov 46) - Bulykin (Sychev 46), Kirichenko.
Booked: Sharonov, Anyukov, Karyaka, Alenichev, Radimov, Malafeev.

Greece (4-3-3): Nikopolidis - Seitaridis, Dellas, Kapsis, Venetidis (Fissas 89) - Basinas (Tsiartas 42), Katsouranis, Zagorakis (c) - Haristeas, Vryzas, Papadopoulos (Nikolaidis 70).
Booked: Vryzas, Dellas.

Too hot to handle...Rooney is felled by Silvestre of France, though Beckham missed the resulting penalty

France first but Rooney roars

The England teenager puts the faltering favourites' efforts in the shade

FRANCE WON THE group, putting them into a quarter-final with Greece rather than hosts Portugal, but they did not win over the doubters in any of their three games, with questions raised over both their defence and attack.

No team had successfully defended the European Championship title, yet the French were overwhelming favourites to retain their crown going into the tournament. But they needed a slice of last-minute magic from Zinedine Zidane against England; were lucky to escape with a point against Croatia; and only a return to form for Europe's leading goalscorer, Thierry Henry, late on against Switzerland confirmed France's place as group winners.

In attack, four of France's seven goals came from set-pieces, with Henry subdued until his double against the Swiss. In defence, the ageing Marcel Desailly proved to be a liability. Coach Jacques Santini was aware of this, but seemed unsure of how to deal with the situation, fielding a different back four in each of France's three games.

England, though stunned by France's late, late show in Lisbon, had no such problems, with teenager Wayne Rooney finishing the group stage as top scorer, despite being substituted by coach Sven Goran Eriksson in all three games.

Debate beforehand had focused on the precise nature of England's midfield formation. But injury in training to Nicky Butt made the debate academic. Even another hot topic, the poor form of striker Michael Owen, was washed away by the flood of adulation for Rooney.

'France's ageing Marcel Desailly proved a liability'

England needed just a point in their final game, against Croatia, to reach the quarter-finals and responded with an emphatic 4-2 victory. The biggest threat hanging over England's continued participation – apart from the team's apparent problems in defending set-pieces – had been possible hooligan misbehaviour. But all three of England's games were trouble-free. Indeed it was Croatia's fans who came under scrutiny from UEFA after monkey chants were aimed at black players from France and England, and fascist banners displayed at games.

The Croats had revelled in their status as underdogs against France, and were unlucky not to beat them. But needing to win against England, they lost their nerve. Ultimately, they paid the price for their caution in their opening match, against the group's weakest team, Switzerland.

The Swiss saved their best football for their last match, against France, but they still lost after Henry's tournament finally sparked into life. Veterans Stephane Chapuisat, Jorg Stiel and Fabio Celestini all announced their international retirement after the match.

Gavin Hamilton

June 13

SWITZERLAND 0 CROATIA 0

Underdogs lack bite

As group underdogs, it was essential for one of these teams to go for a win in Leiria to have a realistic chance of making the last eight.

Croatia seemed more geared up for the challenge, on what was a very hot afternoon, and were gifted an early chance when the Swiss played a free-kick out of their penalty area straight to Tomislav Sokota, with keeper Jorg Stiel out of position. However, Murat Yakin managed a last-ditch block.

Croatia went close again after the Swiss failed to play the offside trap from a free-kick. Josip Simunic saw his effort parried well by Stiel, while the follow-up by Ivica Olic hit the bar and went over.

With the Swiss unable to create any good chances for forwards Stephane Chapuisat and Alexander Frei, they became intent on holding out for a draw. The tactic led to an increasingly fractious game, with several yellow cards being shown. Swiss midfielder Johann Vogel was sent off for a second caution shortly after the break. But despite that, Kobi Kuhn's side held on for a point.

Conrad Leach

June 13

FRANCE 2 ENGLAND 1

ZZ, ZZ, as the English go to sleep

A football match lasts 90 minutes, plus whatever stoppage time the referee permits.

Ouch!...Mornar of Croatia v Switzerland

RESULTS

Switzerland 0	Croatia 0	Croatia 2	France 2
France 2	England 1	Croatia 2	England 4
England 3	Switzerland 0	Switzerland 1	France 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
France	3	2	1	0	7	4	7
England	3	2	0	1	8	4	6
Croatia	3	0	2	1	4	6	2
Switzerland	3	0	1	2	1	6	1

Amid fatigue, England forgot this basic law of the game.

Of course, it was cruel for the English players to see their 1-0 lead turned into a 2-1 defeat during the three extra minutes whistled up by German referee Markus Merk. But their emotional reactions ignored the basic facts: only one team went out to win – France. England's strategy was to contain.

The strategy had worked against Argentina at the last World Cup, when England had snatched an early lead and then defended it to the death. But even after it failed this time round, manager Sven Goran Eriksson insisted that, if England were to meet France again, in the Final, back in the Benfica bowl, his strategy would remain unchanged. Perhaps he has spent a little too long working in Italy.

Eriksson may have been realistically defeatist about his players' inability to defend against Thierry Henry, but he may also have underestimated their ability to take on France in midfield.

"We had to defend deep," said Eriksson, "because if you defend on the halfway line and Henry gets away then you will never catch him." The trouble is, when you defend deep in numbers your own forwards receive barely a look-in. Michael Owen was substituted in the second half but his anonymity was hardly his fault; he received little service. Wayne Rooney battled away to better effect, but then he has physique and the bravado of youth on his side.

So much for the vanquished. Positive analysis demands unstinting praise for France. Just after the break their shape and discipline appeared to be crumbling. Then came Fabien Barthez's penalty save from David Beckham, and the defending champions pulled themselves together.

England's concentration on stifling Henry gave David Trezeguet more opportunity to cause problems, Zinedine Zidane found the space in which to probe, and Patrick Vieira's long legs ate up the kilometres.

Zidane, Trezeguet and Claude Makelele were not far off with early efforts for France. So when England took the lead in the 38th minute it was not only against the run of play but also their first serious effort. Beckham provided the right-wing free-kick, and Frank Lampard made no mistake.

England keeper David James was called into action by Henry twice and Zidane early in the second half, while England managed just two breaks. Beckham climaxed the first by shooting over and the second by having his penalty saved by Barthez after Mickael Silvestre had pulled down Rooney.

Beckham's miss, his second successive penalty failure for England, proved crucial. France stepped on the gas and England ultimately wilted, despite the fresh legs of Darius Vassell, Owen Hargreaves and, disastrously, Emile Heskey. Eriksson's loyalty to Heskey has long aroused scepticism among media and fans. The doubters will have felt vindicated after Heskey's clumsy 'forward's tackle' on the edge of his own penalty box was punished by Zidane's superb free-kick in the first minute of stoppage time. James complained later that the FA's homework video on French free-kicks had not included one taken by Real Madrid's main man.

Less than two minutes later and Steven Gerrard, magnificently defiant until then, underhit a back pass, and James felled the alert Henry. Zidane duly demonstrated exactly how crucial penalties should be converted.

Keir Radnedge

Head up...England's Beckham gets a scoring chance against the Swiss

June 17

ENGLAND 3 SWITZERLAND 0

Cub Rooney rampant for Lions

Given the overall quality of England's performance in their titanic 2-1 opening match loss to France, the only real question going into the Switzerland game concerned their mental reaction to losing the game after being so close to victory.

For the opening 20 minutes, England appeared to be suffering from a bad dose of *Les Bleus* as the modest Swiss set about their task with a fair modicum of industry, control and technique.

However, England's greater class and firepower sorted the game out. In only the 23rd minute the tournament's new boy wonder, Wayne Rooney, headed home from close range following a brilliant build-up that had involved Steven Gerrard, David Beckham and finally Michael Owen. The strike made Rooney, just 18 years and seven months, the youngest ever scorer in the European Championship finals.

Having aroused from its slumbers, the English Lion was never subsequently in difficulty. Even though talented Swiss playmaker Hakan Yakin went close with a free-kick shortly after Rooney's goal, England always gave the impression that, if the Swiss did find an equaliser, they would merely hit the accelerator and score a second goal.

In the end, England received a helping hand from Russian referee Valentin Ivanov, who did not hesitate before sending off Swiss defender Bernt Haas in the 60th minute, following his second bookable offence, a clumsy challenge on Owen.

England went on to make the most of their numerical advantage in the 75th minute when striking on the counter against the weakened Swiss defence. After showing blistering pace, substitute Darius Vassell won a tussle for a long ball with defender Patrick Muller before knocking it wide to the unmarked Rooney. The Everton player made some ground and then set himself up for a piledriver of a shot that hit the post and rebounded into the goal off the head of prostrate keeper Jorg Stiel.

Gerrard, arguably England's best player in a splendid midfield, sealed a terrific individual display with another excellently worked counter-attacking goal.

Afterwards, inevitably, a lot of media attention focused on Rooney. Asked about his goals, the teenager struck a disarmingly simple note when saying: "I just go out looking to do well for the team. For the first goal, Michael put the ball on my head and I couldn't really miss. For the second, I just hit it as hard as I could and it went in."

Indeed. For England, it was a case of the show being back on the road.

Paddy Agnew

SIDELINES

● Player power claims erupted from both the England and France camps. The English FA denied suggestions that the midfield quartet had persuaded coach Sven Goran Eriksson to abandon the diamond formation; France coach Jacques Santini denied that senior players, including Marcel Desailly, had persuaded him to restore the Chelsea veteran for the game against Croatia.

June 17

CROATIA 2 FRANCE 2

The French fluff it

France could have put this match beyond doubt if William Gallas had not headed wide just before the break with his side already 1-0 ahead. Instead, Croatia rallied, scored twice in four minutes in an exciting second half, and were unlucky not to take all three points.

Thierry Henry had almost given France the lead in the seventh minute with a lively turn and volley that flew just past a post. Then Sylvain Wiltord blasted wide as the French

Gone flying...Leko of Croatia is hounded by the French

kept up the pressure in search of the victory that would take them into the quarter-finals.

When they finally did go ahead, in the 22nd minute, the goal came from yet another set-piece, their third out of three at the tournament. A free-kick from Zinedine Zidane (who else?) evaded everybody's head and clipped the heel of Croatia defender Igor Tudor before bouncing into the net.

Zidane, with an improvised backheel from a low-struck corner, gave Gallas the chance to head France into a 2-0 lead on 43 minutes, but the defender's miss offered Croatia hope for the second half.

Croatia's belligerent fans, some sporting banners with fascist insignia, roared their team back into the match. In the 48th minute, Giovanni Rosso was tripped in the area by Mickael Silvestre, conceding a penalty for the second successive game; Milan Rapajic struck the spot-kick low to the left of the diving Fabien Barthez.

Veteran defender Marcel Desailly had returned to the French starting line-up after missing the England game but it was his indecision that allowed Dado Prso to score Croatia's second goal. Desailly failed to clear the bouncing ball, and Prso pounced, thumping his volley past Barthez.

The French players went into a huddle before the restart as they tried to raise their game. But Olivier Dacourt and Wiltord, in for the rested Claude Makelele and Robert Pires, struggled to get a grip on the game.

It took a misjudged backpass and a large slice of luck to get the French back on level terms. Tudor's pass to Tomislav Butina fell short, the keeper's clearance rebounded off the arm of the advancing David Trezeguet, who then steered the ball into the empty net. Robert Kovac was booked for leading Croat protests at Trezeguet's apparent handball, but the goal stood.

In the closing minutes Butina did well to push an Henry effort past a post. But it was Croatia who came closest to a winner. After a surging run by Ivica Olic down the left in stoppage time, fellow substitute Ivica Mornar inexplicably shot over from close range.

"We lost a lot of balls stupidly," said France coach Jacques Santini, in reference to Desailly's mistake before Prso's goal.

His side still had an awful lot to do to successfully defend their championship title.

Gavin Hamilton

SIDELINES

● **Croatia striker Ivica Olic tested positive for the banned substance methylpresnisolone after the France game, but was**

Exonerated...Olic

allowed to play on. He was given a painkilling drug that contained methylpresnisolone after suffering a rib injury during a warm-up game, and UEFA decided he had done nothing wrong.

June 21

CROATIA 2 ENGLAND 4

Wayne's teenage rampage

Wayne Rooney earned all the front-page and back-page headlines after his two-goal bravura display made him top scorer at the tournament and put the seal on the most explosive international finals tournament entry by a young player in modern times.

But Croatia, needing to win to progress where England needed only a draw, made it surprisingly easy. Perhaps they had been intimidated by the nine yellow cards of the previous two games, but the edge had gone from their physical commitment; up front, Tomislav Sokota and Dado Prso abandoned the wide, front-running tactic that so disorientates England's defence; and not until Ivica Mornar's arrival after half-time did they stifle the marauding Ashley Cole.

That was of special relief to the Arsenal left-back, who had contributed inadvertently to the Croats' opening goal after only five minutes. David Beckham was penalised for jumping into Milan Rapajic, whose free-kick Cole knocked back towards his own goal. Keeper David James parried, only for Niko Kovac to follow up and pop Croatia ahead.

"I should not tell you what I was thinking at the time," said England coach Sven Goran Eriksson later, having warned his team about the dangers of Croat free-kicks. "They were not very nice words."

At least that settled the issue about whether England would chase the game or not. Now they had no alternative, and the rest of the half was largely one-way traffic.

The Croats were dangerous only briefly on the break, with James kept alert by Sokota, Prso and Giovanni Rosso. Steven Gerrard was again immense in midfield for England, while Rooney was allowed surprising freedom to drop deep to gain possession, turn and set the attack moving.

On 27 minutes he was pushed by Igor Tudor just outside the box but Beckham's free-kick was blocked by the onrushing wall. Then, when Rooney did get into the box, five minutes before half-time, his intuition proved decisive. Michael Owen forced a floundering save from Tomislav Butina, Rooney headed selflessly square and Paul Scholes glanced in his first international goal for three years.

England, after a slow start, would have been pleased enough to be level at the break. But in first-half stoppage time Rooney thundered home a 25-yard drive that flicked off the flying Butina's thumb and away into the far corner of the net.

After that, Croatia were chasing the game. They brought on Mornar for defender Robert Kovac, and the gaps were exploited superbly. Rooney – exchanging passes with Owen and going in solo on Butina – scored his second, and then Frank Lampard hit a fourth for England. In between, Tudor headed a second for Croatia but it was not enough to spoil England's most effective competitive win since the 3-0 beating of Denmark at the last World Cup.

Croatia coach Otto Baric excused defeat up to a point on a warm-up injury to Robert Kovac but had the grace to accept being beaten "by the better team". Rooney, he thought, was "a very good player, though not a phenomenon – there are at least 10 players in Europe who can stop him."

"I don't know who they are," responded Eriksson. "I don't know if Portugal [England's next opponents] have any of them. I hope not."

Keir Radnedge

June 21

SWITZERLAND 1 FRANCE 3

Henry gets into his stride

Unconvincing they may have been, but France reached the quarter-finals after Thierry Henry finally rediscovered the scoring touch that had deserted him against England and Croatia.

The Arsenal striker struck twice in the last 15 minutes in Coimbra to see off a brave Swiss side who had played well for 75 minutes, hustling France into mistakes and exposing their defensive indecision.

Switzerland were down to the bare bones in terms of attacking personnel following UEFA's suspension of Alexander Frei for spitting at England's Steven Gerrard. Coach Kobi Kuhn opted for youth at the expense of 34-year-old Stephane Chapuisat, handing teenager Johann Vonlanthen his first start.

The Swiss had chances in the first 15 minutes, but Hakan Yakin prodded Ricardo Cabanas's cross wide and then saw his curled free-kick tipped over by Fabien Barthez.

France also wasted scoring opportunities, keeper Jorg Stiel charging down David Trezeguet's shot and Zinedine Zidane fluffing his lines after a brilliant run from Robert Pires, playing to great effect in left midfield.

Spitting image...Frei

France had to rely on a set-piece – the source of their fourth out of five finals goals – to open the scoring, Zidane rising at the near post to head Pires's corner past Stiel.

The Swiss midfield worked tirelessly to unsettle France and fashioned a neatly-worked equaliser against the run of play. Daniel Gygax intercepted Mickael Silvestre's misplaced pass, Yakin's dummy allowed the ball to run to Cabanas, who played in Vonlanthen. The teenager, aged 18 years, four months and 20 days, hooked his shot across Barthez, and entered the record books as the youngest scorer in the tournament's history. Wayne Rooney, three months his senior, had set the mark just four days earlier.

When Henry put another chance wide just before half-time, it looked like it was not going to be his day. Things got worse when he was booked for diving at the start of the second half. But it all came good for him as France pushed for the winner. Louis Saha, a replacement for Trezeguet, headed to Henry with his first touch of the ball; the Arsenal man controlled, turned and blasted it past Stiel for his first goal of the tournament

His confidence restored, Henry roared into life and got a second goal after a glorious run from the left flank, accelerating into the area and striking a shot low to Stiel's left.

Henry had got into his stride, and France were in the quarter-finals.

Gavin Hamilton

SIDELINES

● Switzerland forward Alexander Frei was banned by his own federation after UEFA had cleared him following claims that he spat at England's Steven Gerrard. Subsequent TV evidence prompted the Swiss federation to suspend him of its own volition for the final group game, against France.

In on goal...Henry threatens during France's win over the Swiss

June 13 - Leiria

Switzerland 0
Croatia 0
Att: 24,000. **Ref:** Cortez Batista (Por)

Switzerland (4-3-1-2): Stiel (c) - Haas, M Yakin, Muller, Spycher - Huggel, Vogel, Wicky (Henchoz 83) - H Yakin (Gygax 87) - Chapuisat (Celestini 54), Frei.
Booked: Vogel x 2, Huggel, Stiel.
Sent off: Vogel 50min.

Croatia (4-4-2): Butina - Simic (Srna 61), R Kovac, Simunic, Zivkovic (c) - Mornar, N Kovac, Bjelica (Rosso 74), Olic (Rapajic 46) - Prso, Sokota.
Booked: Prso, Bjelica, Rapajic, Zivkovic, Mornar.

June 13 - Lisbon (Luz)

France 2 (Zidane 90, pen 90)
England 1 (Lampard 38)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 65,272. **Ref:** Merk (Ger)

France (4-4-2): Barthez - Gallas, Thuram, Silvestre (Sagnol 79), Lizarazu - Pires (Wiltord 76), Vieira, Makelele (Dacourt 90), Zidane (c) - Trezeguet, Henry.
Booked: Pires, Silvestre.

England (4-4-2): James - G Neville, King, Campbell, A Cole - Beckham (c), Lampard, Gerrard, Scholes (Hargreaves 76) - Rooney (Heskey 76), Owen (Vassell 69).
Booked: Scholes, Lampard, James.

June 17 - Coimbra

England 3 (Rooney 23, 75, Gerrard 82)
Switzerland 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 28,214. **Ref:** Ivanov (Rus)

England (4-4-2): James - G Neville, Terry, Campbell, A Cole - Beckham (c), Gerrard, Lampard, Scholes (Hargreaves 70) - Owen (Vassell 72), Rooney (Dyer 83).
Booked: Rooney.

Switzerland (4-3-1-2): Stiel (c) - Haas, M Yakin, Muller, Spycher - Huggel, Celestini (Cabanas 53), Wicky - H Yakin (Vonlanthen 83) - Chapuisat (Gygax 46), Frei.
Booked: Celestini, Haas x 2.
Sent off: Haas 60min.

June 17 - Leiria

Croatia 2 (Rapajic pen 48, Prso 52)
France 2 (Tudor og 22, Trezeguet 64)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 28,000. **Ref:** Milton Nielsen (Den)

Croatia (4-4-2): Butina - Simic (c), Tudor, R Kovac, Simunic - Rosso, N Kovac, Bjelica (Leko 68), Rapajic (Mornar 87) - Prso, Sokota (Olic 73).
Booked: Tudor, Rosso, R Kovac, Leko.

France (4-4-2): Barthez - Gallas (Sagnol 81), Thuram, Desailly (c), Silvestre - Wiltord (Pires 70), Dacourt (Pedretti 79), Vieira, Zidane - Trezeguet, Henry.
Booked: Vieira, Dacourt.

June 21 - Lisbon (Luz)

Croatia 2 (N Kovac 5, Tudor 73)
England 4 (Scholes 40, Rooney 45, 68, Lampard 79)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 62,000. **Ref:** Collina (Ita)

Croatia (4-4-2): Butina - Simic (Srna 67), Tudor, R Kovac (Mornar 46), Simunic - Rosso, N Kovac, Zivkovic (c), Rapajic (Olic 55) - Prso, Sokota.
Booked: Simic.

England (4-4-2): James - G Neville, Terry, Campbell, A Cole - Beckham (c), Lampard (P Neville 84), Gerrard, Scholes (King 70) - Owen, Rooney (Vassell 72).
Booked: none.

June 21 - Coimbra

Switzerland 1 (Vonlanthen 26)
France 3 (Zidane 20, Henry 76, 84)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 28,111. **Ref:** Michel (Slk)

Switzerland (4-3-2-1): Stiel (c) - Henchoz (Magnin 85), M Yakin, Muller, Spycher - Cabanas, Vogel, Wicky - Gygax (Rama 85), H Yakin (Huggel 60) - Vonlanthen.
Booked: H Yakin, Wicky, Huggel.

France (4-4-2): Barthez - Sagnol (Gallas 46; Boumsong 90), Thuram, Silvestre, Lizarazu - Zidane (c), Vieira, Makelele, Pires - Trezeguet (Saha 75), Henry.
Booked: Henry.

Scandinavian success...Sweden and Denmark have something to celebrate after reaching the quarter-finals

Italy fall with fixed ideas

Denmark and Sweden's draw ousts the outdated *Azzurri*

ITALY SLUNK OUT of the tournament sounding a familiar refrain. Coach Giovanni Trapattoni was dignified on his team's exit, refusing to be drawn on claims that Denmark and Sweden had contrived to draw their final game 2-2 to put both into the quarter-finals at the expense of Italy, who also finished on five points having won their final game, against Bulgaria.

But some of Italy's players, notably goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon, questioned the morality of the Scandinavians' result. Most controversially, Italian federation president Franco Carraro told Italian TV: "There are no doubts in my mind that these two teams were trying for the draw, but obviously this is difficult to prove."

Just as at the 2002 World Cup, the *Azzurri* made an early exit amid controversy. But frankly they did not deserve to progress. Although they were unbeaten, they won only one of their three group games, scored only three goals and produced just one outstanding spell of football – against Sweden. The suspension of Francesco Totti after he was caught on camera spitting at Denmark's Christian Poulsen was just the start of Italy's problems.

"We did our job as best we could in the circumstances, so we leave with our heads held high," said Trapattoni, whose contract expired the day after the final group game. "I've always been lucky with clubs but not so lucky with the national team."

'I have no doubt they were trying for the draw'

Italian federation president Franco Carraro voices his conspiracy theory over the Denmark-Sweden result

But luck had nothing to do with it. Sitting on a goal lead or even defending a draw no longer works now that players are punished by referees for pulling, tugging and making tackles from behind.

Even despite prehistoric tactics and Totti's suicidal expectoration, Italy possessed the ability to progress. Yet their biggest names – Totti, Christian Vieri, Alessandro Del Piero – were their biggest flops.

Sweden and Denmark flatly rejected the darker theories emanating from Italy. Denmark coach Morten Olsen refused to even take questions on the matter in his post-match press conference. Where Italy had been defensive and negative, the Scandinavians played a fast, technical game that suited their attacking strengths. Against Sweden, Olsen kept his attacking quartet of two strikers and two wingers on the pitch until the final whistle.

Sweden topped the group because they scored most goals in their draws with Denmark and Italy. They also scored most goals overall after their 5-0 thrashing of Bulgaria in their opening game.

But the Bulgarians were unlucky to lose all their three games, with the Petrovs, Stilian and Martin, both impressing.

Gavin Hamilton

June 14

DENMARK 0 ITALY 0

Keepers on top

The two goalkeepers were the stars in Guimaraes as Denmark and Italy played out a goalless draw that was more exciting than its scoreline suggested.

Dane Thomas Sorensen deserved to be selected as the official man of the match after making three outstanding saves.

"Sorensen kept us in the game at times," conceded his coach, Morten Olsen. "We showed a fantastic will to win. Physically and tactically the players did exactly as we had agreed before the game."

Olsen had been unable to call on Jesper Gronkjaer, because of the death of his mother, and the suspended Thomas Gravesen. But the Danes played the livelier football in the first half, Thomas Helveg going close after a run through the heart of Italy's midfield, and Jon Dahl Tomasson heading wide from Niclas Jensen's free-kick.

Italy started with Alessandro Del Piero on the left flank, and Francesco Totti and Mauro Camoranesi the other advanced midfielders behind lone striker Christian Vieri.

Christian Poulsen's man-marking of Totti was to prove one of the game's more intriguing sideshows. At one stage the Italian appeared to elbow Poulsen in the stomach, but the offence went unpunished, while the spitting offence for which Totti would subsequently be banned for three matches also went unnoticed by the referee and was only spotted on TV footage after the match.

Totti sent a free-kick wide after 13 minutes, and Italy did not seriously threaten Denmark's goal until a minute before the break, when Sorensen twice saved brilliantly, first to deny Del Piero, then when scooping Totti's shot away one-handed.

Italy coach Giovanni Trapattoni made tactical changes at half-time, with Del Piero moving up to support Vieri, and Italy became more of a threat.

Totti demonstrated his importance as the *Azzurri's* most creative influence with a turn and though pass to Gianluca Zambrotta, who shot wide of the far post.

Zambrotta then sent over a cross for Vieri, whose header was acrobatically tipped over by Sorensen, while Christian Panucci should have done better than head over from a corner.

Italy lost momentum when Antonio Cassano replaced Del Piero, and Denmark regained the initiative. Ebbe Sand headed Martin Jorgensen's cross over the bar, and then Italy keeper Gianluigi Buffon kept out efforts from Tomasson and Dennis Rommedahl.

"Today's result does not come as a surprise for us," said Sorensen. "In the past

RESULTS

Denmark 0	Italy 0	Italy 1	Sweden 1
Sweden 5	Bulgaria 0	Italy 2	Bulgaria 1
Bulgaria 0	Denmark 2	Denmark 2	Sweden 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Sweden	3	1	2	0	8	3	5
Denmark	3	1	2	0	4	2	5
Italy	3	1	2	0	3	2	5
Bulgaria	3	0	0	3	1	9	0

Launched...Italy's Gattuso against Denmark

two years we've played some high-quality and consistent football."

Gavin Hamilton

June 14

SWEDEN 5 BULGARIA 0

Larsson leads the charge

Sweden roared out of the starting blocks, hitting five goals against an unlucky Bulgaria in Lisbon. The scoreline confirmed the potency of the Scandinavians' attack following the return of Henrik Larsson from international retirement.

In the run-up to the tournament, goals had been expected to be a problem for Sweden. But after Larsson's surprise return to the fold, his partnership with the tall, enigmatic Zlatan Ibrahimovic suddenly looked capable of great things.

There has long been a question mark over Larsson's true class because his impressive goal haul at club level has come for Celtic, in Scotland, not one of Europe's top leagues. But there was no denying the quality of his goals against Bulgaria as Sweden issued a strong declaration of attacking intent.

The final scoreline was unfair on Bulgaria, who battled well in the first half. The work ethic was epitomised by captain Stilian Petrov and winger Martin Petrov, while Georgi Peev, Zoran Jankovic and Martin Petrov all missed chances before Dimitar Berbatov's header forced backpedalling keeper Andreas Isaksson to tip over the bar.

But it was Sweden who took the lead, and with a well-worked goal. Mikael Nilsson's pass to Ibrahimovic sprung the offside trap, Ibrahimovic drew the keeper, then rolled the ball to Freddie Ljungberg for an easy tap-in.

There were chances for both sides after the restart. Jankovic saw his header go agonisingly wide of a post, while Ljungberg, free on goal, found his shot blocked by the knees of keeper Zdravko Zdravkov.

The match turned irrevocably in Sweden's favour with Larsson's double strike after 57 and 58 minutes. The first was a brilliant diving header from Erik Edman's fiercely-drilled left-wing cross; the second, a close-range tap-in after Zdravkov missed Anders Svensson's low cross from the right.

Further goals from Ibrahimovic (penalty) and substitute Marcus Allback, in injury time, confirmed the Swedes' attacking potential.

John Holmesdale

June 18

BULGARIA 0 DENMARK 2

Danes coast to victory

Denmark were favourites to beat Bulgaria, who now had to gain at least a point from this clash in Braga to remain in the competition.

The Danes started brightly in a stadium that, having been carved out of a quarry, had no fans behind either goal but still had plenty of atmosphere.

Morten Olsen's split attacking duo of Jon Dahl Tomasson and Ebbe Sand caused Bulgaria all sorts of problems, with both players missing presentable chances early on.

Thomas Gravesen, back in the starting line-up after being suspended for the Italy game, was at the heart of most of Denmark's best moves, while Jesper Gronkjaer, returned from his mother's funeral, was brought on in the first half for the injured Dennis Rommedahl.

Gronkjaer looked sharp as he switched between flanks but Bulgaria gradually grew in confidence, and Marian Hristov and Martin Petrov both had good opportunities to score in quick succession shortly before half-time.

Having spurned those chances, they were then carved open by a pass from Gravesen to Martin Jorgensen. The winger slipped the ball to Tomasson, who tapped in.

The Danes appeared to coast for most of the second half and when Bulgaria were denied a penalty 10 minutes from full-time they took their anger out on their opponents, leading to a flurry of yellow cards.

Midfielder Stilian Petrov was sent off, and as Bulgaria's heads dropped Gronkjaer grabbed Denmark's second goal, finishing off a one-two by shooting into the far corner.

Conrad Leach

Banned...Totti

SIDELINES

● Italy forward Francesco Totti was suspended for three matches for spitting at Denmark midfielder Christian Poulsen in the teams' opening game. Spanish referee Manuel Mejuto Gonzalez did not see the incident, in the 50th minute, but UEFA acted on TV web-cam evidence after a complaint from the Danish FA.

Stadium rock...Bulgaria v Denmark against a unique backdrop in Braga

June 18

ITALY 1 SWEDEN 1

Don't defend your lead!

The golden rule of the tournament group stage was becoming abundantly clear – that it was dangerous to try to defend a one-goal lead. Just as England had failed to take heed to their cost against France, so Italy discovered the pitfalls of such a strategy against Sweden.

The Italians played some of the best football seen in the tournament so far, and took a deserved lead through young forward Antonio Cassano late in the first half. But coach Giovanni Trapattoni replaced Cassano with a midfielder, Stefano Fiore, with 20 minutes remaining, and substituted another striker, Alessandro Del Piero, in the 82nd minute as his team sat back to defend their lead. With the clock ticking down Zlatan Ibrahimovic snatched a dramatic equaliser for Sweden.

Cassano was the most high-profile change to Italy's starting line-up from the game against Denmark. The 21-year-old Roma striker replaced his suspended club-mate Francesco Totti.

Trapattoni also rang the changes in midfield, with the Milan pair of Andrea Pirlo and Gennaro Gattuso coming in at the expense of injured Cristiano Zanetti and out-of-sorts Mauro Camoranesi.

The new men gave Italy a more dynamic, confident attitude and for the first hour of the match they swept forward, passing crisply and creating numerous scoring opportunities.

There were at least six chances for Del Piero and Christian Vieri as Gianluca Zambrotta and Christian Panucci caused havoc on the flanks and Pirlo got into his

Leapfrog...Bulgaria's Zagorcic sends Corradi of Italy tumbling

stride in midfield. So Italy's goal in the 37th minute was thoroughly deserved. Cassano justified his selection with a header past keeper Andreas Isaksson after Panucci had cut in from the left and crossed with his right foot.

There were further chances for Italy in the second half, notably a header from Del Piero that went over the bar. But the substitution of Cassano signalled Italy's defensive intent.

Sweden brought on Kim Kallstrom and Mattias Jonson, and for the last 15 minutes, with Marcus Allback on for Erik Edman, they played an attacking 3-4-3.

Gianluigi Buffon produced a great save to deny Jonson, who also headed over the bar, before a clever piece of improvisation from Ibrahimovic resulted in Sweden's equaliser. Italy failed to clear a corner, and from the resulting scramble the Ajax forward backheeled the loose ball over Vieri on the goal-line.

There was still time for Vieri to put two more headers over the bar at the other end before the Swedes celebrated at the final whistle. "It was a lucky goal," Ibrahimovic admitted. "But in training we always practise one-touch football in front of goal."

Lucky Sweden, same old Italy.

Gavin Hamilton

June 22

ITALY 2 BULGARIA 1

Winners take nothing

Sweden's Anders Andersson hinted at what was to come when he advised the Italians to "stop worrying so much about our game against Denmark and concentrate on your own game, against Bulgaria".

But that would not be in the Italian nature. The stars of Serie A, which, each spring, produces the most illogical results at the climax to the battle against relegation, could not comprehend the devilish irony that pushed them inexorably down into *calcio* hell.

Italy went into the final matchday needing to win while hoping that either Denmark or Sweden won their game. If the Nordic saga ended in a score draw of 2-2 or higher, even an Italian win would be useless.

With the *Azzurri* held to a 1-1 scoreline in Guimaraes and just one minute of injury time remaining, Massimo Oddo strode down the right and crossed for Antonio Cassano to swing his right-foot, first-time shot into the net. It was a superb strike and Cassano was thus doubly exultant. He ran in delight to the bench, believing that Denmark led Sweden 2-1 and that Italy had qualified.

The stony faces that greeted him told the disastrous news that Sweden had struck almost as late as Italy. Cassano tumbled to his knees in tears, while Bulgaria, furious at letting Italy off the hook, could hardly bring themselves to restart for what little remained of the game.

Italy's Gianluigi Buffon had been the first of the two keepers called into action, deflecting an angled drive from Martin Petrov for a corner after 12 minutes.

Petrov tested him again in the 29th minute and finally got the better of Buffon from the penalty spot on the stroke of half-time after Dimitar Berbatov had been pulled down by Marco Materazzi.

Italy fumbled a handful of openings – Alessandro Del Piero stabbed wastefully wide from close range, a Cassano toe-poke bounced behind, and another Del Piero effort was blocked by Predrag Pazin.

At that stage, with Denmark winning 1-0, Italy were bottom of the group. They edged up to third place in the 48th minute when Cassano smacked the crossbar, Zdravko Zdravkov dropped the loose ball and Simone Perrotta flipped in the equaliser.

Over in Porto, Sweden equalised, then went 2-1 behind as Italy stumbled on blindly, their passing ragged, their discipline failing, their confidence fading. Christian Vieri and Oddo joined in as substitutes – for Bernardo Corradi and Perrotta – Andrea Pirlo twice drove wide, Vieri headed wide, Cassano was felled by Zlatomir Zagorcic but Russian referee Valentin Ivanov waved away Italy's penalty claims.

As the clock ticked down so Bulgaria threatened a killer blow on the break, and Berbatov had a thunderous free-kick superbly saved by Buffon.

Four minutes into stoppage time Cassano, at last, struck a goal. Too little, too late and winning nothing save an early flight home.

Keir Radnedge

SIDELINES

● Soren Gellerstedt, an 85-year-old Swedish farmer, claimed he was kept alive by his country's 5-0 thrashing of Bulgaria, having been stranded for four days without food in remote countryside. All he had for company was a radio but the commentary on the game gave him reason not to despair before a rescue party eventually found him. "The victory over Bulgaria saved my life," said Gellerstedt. "I had nothing to drink except rain water and I was desperately thirsty, but the team gave me the best lift I could have had."

June 22

DENMARK 2 SWEDEN 2

Scandinavians score with draw

The build-up to this final group game had been dominated by suggestions that the two sides might contrive to arrange a 2-2 draw, which would take them both through at the expense of Italy.

Dramatic finale...Jonson (centre) pounces to earn Sweden a draw with Denmark

But while that proved to be the final result, there was nothing untoward about it. Italian conspiracy theorists had no grounds for complaint.

In the face of accusations of connivance from Italian cynics, the Danes and Swedes had vowed beforehand that they would attack. They were true to their word. "We can go out of this match with our heads held high," said Sweden co-coach Lars Lagerback afterwards as his side were confirmed as group winners.

Denmark twice took the lead through Jon Dahl Tomasson, and had chances to extend their advantage to 3-1, before Mattias Jonson snatched a late equaliser after a mistake by Danish keeper Thomas Sorensen.

The Danes had the early ascendancy on a pitch where the ball fizzed around in the drizzle. Martin Jorgensen miscued when presented with Denmark's first chance, then Jesper Gronkjaer struck the side-netting when played through by Tomasson, who had seized on a slip by Andreas Jakobsson.

Thomas Gravesen was Denmark's most influential midfielder, but his ball-winning skills were more effective than his distribution.

It took a superb piece of improvisation for the Danes to open the scoring, just before the half-hour. With Andreas Isaksson not far off his line, Tomasson reacted cleverly to Ebbe Sand's bouncing lay-off, sending a perfectly-measured volley dipping over the Sweden keeper.

At the other end, Sorensen was forced into a brilliant double save after 35 minutes, first from Henrik Larsson and then from Zlatan Ibrahimovic as Sweden pressed for the equaliser. Captain Olof Mellberg headed a corner against a post, and then Jonson headed over.

News that Italy were losing at half-time only spurred on the Swedes. Larsson won and then slammed home a debatable penalty, after he had lured Sorensen into making a challenge two minutes into the second period.

Danish substitutes Dennis Rommedahl and Christian Poulsen looked promising but it took a lucky break for the Danes to retake the lead.

Gravesen's shot from outside the area pinballed off Ibrahimovic and Jakobsson before falling kindly to Tomasson, who swept the ball past Isaksson.

The Danes had further chances to extend their lead through Sand (twice), Gronkjaer and Rommedahl, but Sweden equalised for a second time with a minute to go when Jonson was on hand to hook the ball in when Sorensen dropped substitute Christian Wilhelmsson's cross.

Honours even, and a result that left everybody happy. Everybody, of course, except the Italians.

Gavin Hamilton

Return...Gronkjaer

SIDELINES

● Denmark winger Jesper Gronkjaer missed the first game against Italy following the death of his mother from cancer. He rejoined the squad after her funeral in time to appear as a substitute, and score, in Denmark's 2-0 victory over Bulgaria.

June 14 - Guimaraes

Denmark 0
Italy 0
Att: 19,595. **Ref:** Mejuto Gonzalez (Spa)

Denmark (4-2-3-1): Sorensen - Helveg, Laursen, Henriksen (c), N Jensen - D Jensen, Poulsen (Priske 76) - Rommedahl, Tomasson, Jorgensen (Perez 72) - Sand (C Jensen 69).
Booked: Tomasson, Helveg.

Italy (4-2-3-1): Buffon - Panucci, Nesta, Cannavaro (c), Zambrotta - Zanetti (Gattuso 57), Perrotta - Camoranesi (Fiore 68), Totti, Del Piero (Cassano 64) - Vieri.
Booked: Cannavaro, Cassano, Gattuso, Totti.

June 14 - Lisbon (Jose Alvalade)

Sweden 5 (Ljungberg 32, Larsson 57, 58, Ibrahimovic pen 78, Allback 90)
Bulgaria 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 31,652. **Ref:** Riley (Eng)

Sweden (4-1-3-2): Isaksson - Lucic (Wilhelmsson 41), Mellberg (c), Jakobsson, Edman - Linderoth - Nilsson, Svensson (Kallstrom 76), Ljungberg - Ibrahimovic (Allback 81), Larsson.
Booked: Linderoth, Ibrahimovic.

Bulgaria (4-4-2): Zdravkov - Ivanov, Kirilov, Pazin, I Petkov - Peev, S Petrov (c), Hristov, M Petrov (Lazarov 84) - Jankovic (Dimitrov 62), Berbatov (Manchev 76).
Booked: I Petkov, Kirilov, Jankovic, Ivanov.

June 18 - Braga

Bulgaria 0
Denmark 2 (Tomasson 44, Gronkjaer 90)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 22,000. **Ref:** Cortez Batista (Por)

Bulgaria (4-4-1-1): Zdravkov - Ivanov (Lazarov 51), Kirilov, Stoyanov, I Petkov (Zagorcic 40) - Peev, Hristov, S Petrov (c), M Petrov - Jankovic (M Petkov 81) - Berbatov.
Booked: Kirilov, Stoyanov, S Petrov x 2, Zagorcic, Hristov, M Petrov.
Sent off: S Petrov 83min.

Denmark (4-2-1-3): Sorensen - Helveg, Laursen, Henriksen (c), N Jensen - D Jensen, Gravesen - Tomasson - Rommedahl (Gronkjaer 23), Sand, Jorgensen (C Jensen 72).
Booked: N Jensen, Sand.

June 18 - Porto (Dragao)

Italy 1 (Cassano 37)
Sweden 1 (Ibrahimovic 85)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 44,927. **Ref:** Meier (Swi)

Italy (4-3-1-2): Buffon - Panucci, Cannavaro (c), Nesta, Zambrotta - Gattuso (Favalli 76), Pirlo, Perrotta - Cassano (Fiore 70) - Vieri, Del Piero (Camoranesi 82).
Booked: Gattuso, Cannavaro, Zambrotta.

Sweden (4-1-3-2): Isaksson - Nilsson, Mellberg (c), Jakobsson, Edman (Allback 77) - Linderoth - Wilhelmsson (Jonson 67), Svensson (Kallstrom 55), Ljungberg - Ibrahimovic, Larsson.
Booked: Edman, Linderoth.

June 22 - Guimaraes

Italy 2 (Perrotta 48, Cassano 90)
Bulgaria 1 (M Petrov pen 45)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 16,002. **Ref:** Ivanov (Rus)

Italy (4-3-3): Buffon - Panucci, Nesta, Materazzi (Di Vaio 83), Zambrotta - Perrotta (Oddo 68), Pirlo, Fiore - Cassano, Corradi (Vieri 53), Del Piero (c).
Booked: Materazzi.

Bulgaria (4-2-3-1): Zdravkov (c) - Borimirov, Pazin (Kotev 64), Zagorcic, Stoyanov - Hristov (Dimitrov 79), M Petkov - Lazarov, Jankovic (Bojinov 46), M Petrov - Berbatov.
Booked: M Petrov, Bojinov, Stoyanov, Lazarov.

June 22 - Porto (Bessa)

Denmark 2 (Tomasson 28, 66)
Sweden 2 (Larsson pen 47, Jonson 89)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 26,115. **Ref:** Merk (Ger)

Denmark (4-2-1-3): Sorensen - Helveg, Laursen, Henriksen (c), N Jensen (Bogelund 46) - D Jensen (Poulsen 65), Gravesen - Tomasson - Gronkjaer, Sand, Jorgensen (Rommedahl 57).
Booked: none.

Sweden (4-1-3-2): Isaksson - Nilsson, Mellberg (c), Jakobsson, Edman - Andersson (Allback 81) - Jonson, Kallstrom (Wilhelmsson 72), Ljungberg - Ibrahimovic, Larsson.
Booked: Edman, Kallstrom.

Hanging tough...Jaap Stam and Milan Baros battle it out during the epic Holland-Czech Republic clash

Comeback kings

The Czechs go behind in each game but win all three

THE CZECH REPUBLIC emerged from the group stage as the only team to win all three of their matches. Victories against Latvia and Holland allowed coach Karel Bruckner the luxury of resting nine players, including the outstanding Pavel Nedved, for the final match, in which the Czechs retained their 100 per cent record and condemned Germany to an ignominious exit.

Technically slick and tactically adaptable, the Czech Republic confirmed the promise of their qualifying campaign. Just as four years ago, they went into the finals with an unbeaten record from their qualifiers and were placed in an equally tough group. But this time the Czechs did not crack under the strain.

Yet despite the ease with which they attacked throughout the group stage, they went behind in each game. Against Latvia, missed chances almost came back to haunt them after the Baltic side took a shock lead. It took late strikes from Milan Baros and Marek Heinz for the Czechs to recover their dignity.

After that early hiccup, they set the tournament alight with a thrilling comeback from 2-0 down against Holland to win 3-2 and seal their place in the quarter-finals. Germany's goalless draw with Latvia earlier the same day confirmed the Czechs as group winners.

Holland finished runners-up despite having only drawn their opening game with Germany and lost to the Czechs. Coach Dick Advocaat came under fire, particularly for his substitution of winger Arjen Robben when the Dutch were leading the latter match 2-1. Robben said he was "flabbergasted", but Advocaat defended his decision at a hastily-arranged press conference the following day.

Anyway, a 3-0 rout of a tired Latvia in Braga revived Holland's fortunes. The win would not have been enough to see them into the knockout stages had Germany beaten the Czech B team. But the Germans' lack of firepower was again exposed and they slunk home.

"It's not the debacle of four years ago," insisted coach Rudi Voller, referring to Germany's bottom-place finish at Euro 2000. "I cannot criticise my players' commitment. We have problems scoring goals and can no longer dominate games. But we have good young players coming through, like [Philipp] Lahm and [Bastian] Schweinsteiger. We will just have to work with them." But the 'we' was clearly used in a general sense since Voller resigned the next day.

For Latvia, who approached their first major tournament with low expectations, the draw with Germany was treated as a momentous victory. "When we came here, the prospects of us making progress were treated as a joke," said coach Aleksandrs Starkovs. "But nobody is laughing now."

Gavin Hamilton

'We have problems scoring and can't dominate games'

Coach Rudi Voller spells it out after another poor European Championship for Germany

June 15

CZECH REP 2 LATVIA 1

Latvians crack late on

Latvia set up what would have been one of the shocks of the tournament after taking the lead against the Czech Republic in Aveiro and holding on to it deep into the second half.

The tournament small fry were playing their first game at a major championship and looked set to make it especially memorable after striker Maris Verpakovskis put them in front just before the break.

But after missing plenty of chances, the Czechs battled their way back. Two goals in the last 17 minutes, from Liverpool forward Milan Baros and substitute Marek Heinz rescued the much-needed three points.

The Czechs could have opened the scoring inside the first minute when Pavel Nedved's cross-shot went just wide.

Nedved proceeded to pull the strings at the heart of midfield and set up Jan Koller for a header on goal after 11 minutes. However, keeper Aleksandrs Kolinko fingertipped the ball to safety. The Czechs wasted another golden opportunity 13 minutes later when Karel Poborsky's cross was headed wide by Rene Bolf from close range.

It appeared that those missed chances might well come back to haunt them after Latvia scored a shock goal in first-half stoppage time. Igors Stepanovs' astute pass out of defence found Andrejs Prohorenkovs, who skipped down the left before playing a perfect ball into the box for the onrushing Verpakovskis to slip home.

Czeched...Poborsky against Latvia

RESULTS

Czech Rep 2	Latvia 1	Holland 2	Czech Rep 3
Germany 1	Holland 1	Holland 3	Latvia 0
Latvia 0	Germany 0	Germany 1	Czech Rep 2

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Czech Rep	3	3	0	0	7	4	9
Holland	3	1	1	1	6	4	4
Germany	3	0	2	1	2	3	2
Latvia	3	0	1	2	1	5	1

The Czechs continued to create chances in the second half, and Baros must have thought it was not going to be his day after 62 minutes when he made a clever turn inside the box only to fire just over the bar.

However, he made up for the miss 11 minutes later when scoring the Czechs' deserved equaliser. Poborsky's cross was not dealt with by Kolinko, and the ball fell kindly to Baros, who made no mistake.

The Czechs then cancelled out all the Latvians' efforts with just five minutes left. The Latvian defence failed to clear the ball and Heinz volleyed past Kolinko.

Baros admitted his side were lucky to come away with a victory, saying: "We know there are no easy games at Euro 2004. Latvia defended very well, and unfortunately we could not score the first goal. That made life more difficult for us, but we showed the spirit to come back."

Marc Isaacs

June 15

GERMANY 1 HOLLAND 1

Shaky rivals settle for point

Germany and Holland, both former champions, were under severe pressure even before the tournament kicked off. UEFA's official man of the match, Michael Ballack, acknowledged as much after their 1-1 draw, saying: "Public confidence in both teams was at an all-time low." But added: "Now both teams have been vindicated."

The shaky confidence was reflected in the traditional rivals' starting line-ups. Holland coach Dick Advocaat favoured the traditional lone striker and two wingers, with Ruud Van Nistelrooy flanked by Andy Van der Meyde and Boudewijn Zenden, and the more attacking Marc Overmars and Arjen Robben left on the bench.

Germany's Rudi Voller selected Kevin Kuranyi on his own up front, with Ballack as the attacking mover and shaker in a midfield that set out to hold the Dutch at bay.

Van Nistelrooy had a chance as early as the second minute, but could not connect with Philip Cocu's pass over the German defence. For the remainder of the half the Dutch failed to find any momentum. Too often the wingers played too deep, leaving Van Nistelrooy isolated.

It was Germany, albeit with limited ambition, who started to impose themselves on the game. Kuranyi, set up by the increasingly influential Dietmar Hamann, had a shot tipped over the bar by Edwin Van der Sar. From the resulting corner Christian Worns' header bounced down and also went over.

But a Germany goal was coming. After Cocu had fouled Philipp Lahm on Germany's left flank, Torsten Frings' free-kick evaded everybody and bounced in off the far post.

Coming through...Latvia's Verpakovskis threatens Germany

At the break Overmars and Wesley Sneijder were brought on for Zenden and Edgar Davids, and the changes made for a much livelier half. Sneijder forced Oliver Kahn into his first save after 56 minutes, and Wilfred Bouma headed over from a corner. Germany, with Hamann and Frank Baumann dominant in central midfield, seemed content to hit Holland on the break.

It was only after the late arrival of Pierre Van Hooijdonk as a second striker that Holland began to seriously threaten. The equaliser arrived in the 81st minute, Van Nistelrooy brilliantly hooking in Van der Meyde's right-flank cross from a seemingly impossible angle.

Both teams, too scared of losing to field attacking teams, deserved no better. "There was disappointment in the dressing-room at not winning," said Voller, "but we can live with this result."

"It was the right result between two teams who had a lot of respect for each other," said Advocaat.

Gavin Hamilton

June 19

LATVIA 0 GERMANY 0

Cautious Germany draw a blank

Germany are far and away from their once-confident, adventurous selves. Both the coach, Rudi Voller, and their man of the match, Michael Ballack, admitted afterwards that their watchword was caution.

The Germans feared Latvia's capacity to attack on the break. Indeed, as Latvia's wily coach, Aleksandrs Starkovs, said, the salient moment of the match came in the second half, when star striker Maris Verpakovskis set off on a glorious solo run, left the whole German defence behind him, only for Oliver Kahn to plunge on his shot.

Voller lamented the difficulty Germany had in scoring, especially a late miss by substitute Miroslav Klose, who headed a left-wing cross hopelessly wide.

Latvian keeper Aleksandrs Kolinko made an uncertain start but then saved well from Fredi Bobic, who had gone round the largely reliable centre-back Igors Stepanovs.

In the second half, Kolinko punched out a shot by Kevin Kuranyi and, gaining confidence, capably handled a series of crosses.

Odd to think that Kolinko was ejected by Crystal Palace for laughing on the bench when the opposition scored, an act that got him a slap from his angry manager, Trevor Francis. Andrejs Rubins, a lively midfielder, also failed at Palace. Stepanovs, who near the end turned to the Latvian fans behind the goal, whirling his arms to encourage them, had a miserable time at Arsenal. Captain Vitalijs Astafjevs did little at Bristol Rovers.

Asked how he had revitalised them, Starkovs replied that as long as he kept his secret, he'd be in work! Commenting on the game itself, he felt the Germans were an easier proposition than the Czechs, who had more variety to their game.

Germany did play better following the half-time introduction of Bastian Schweinsteiger, a surprising, late choice for the squad who showed some much-needed energy, skill and initiative.

But apart from him and Ballack, the Germans had little to offer despite all their pressure and possession.

Brian Glanville

SIDELINES

● Germany's players were encouraged by team doctor Tim Meyer not to have sex before games and to drink plenty of water instead. "I regard sex a few hours before a game as a problem," said Meyer, who feared the physical and emotional strain involved. The players' wives and partners were staying at a hotel next door to the one being used by the squad, near the Algarve resort of Almancil.

June 19

HOLLAND 2 CZECH REP 3

Czechs edge a thriller

An extraordinary match. A thrilling, pulsating, adrenaline-fuelled goalfest that drained the emotions and left the privileged 29,935 crowd wanting more.

For the Czech Republic, who roared back from 2-0 down to triumph, there was the reward of a place in the quarter-finals. For Holland, there was the small consolation of knowing they had participated in one of the most remarkable matches in the history of the European Championship.

There was goalmouth drama, endless attacking play, brilliant goalkeeping, bizarre tactical switches, controversial substitutions and a questionable red card.

Philip Cocu dropped back into a back three for Holland, who lined up with more attacking purpose than in their opening match, against Germany. Arjen Robben started in place of Boudewijn Zenden on the

left wing, while Clarence Seedorf, who had missed the opening game through injury, was back in the frame.

However, it was the Czechs who almost made the perfect start, in the second minute, only for Jan Koller to send his volley flying over the bar after Tomas Rosicky had cleverly chipped the Dutch defence.

Holland, with Edgar Davids a dynamic presence in midfield, soon took advantage. The unmarked Wilfred Bouma headed in Robben's inswinging free-kick from the right flank for the first goal. Robben was again the provider for Holland's second, laying on the pass for Ruud Van Nistelrooy to slide home from six yards. Van Nistelrooy had been in an offside position, grounded and claiming to have been pushed in the previous attack, when the ball was played through the Czech defence to Robben. But the goal was allowed to stand.

Just as Holland were in the ascendancy, they let the Czechs back into the match. Cocu's backpass was intercepted by Milan Baros, whose run into the area was stopped by the uncompromising Jaap Stam. But the Liverpool forward still managed to squeeze the ball through to Koller, who had an easy tap-in.

With the game just 25 minutes old, the Czechs made their first tactical switch, bringing on Vladimir Smicer and changing to 3-5-2 from 4-4-2. But still more chances fell to Holland. Johnny Heitinga saw his shot tipped over, Seedorf shot just wide from 25 yards, and Davids' low drive thundered off the inside of a post.

Both keepers made crucial saves with their feet as the second half got under way – Edwin Van der Sar from Karel Poborsky and Petr Cech from Van Nistelrooy – before the most significant substitution of the game. Dick Advocaat said his decision to replace the lively Robben with the more combative Paul Bosvelt was made with the intention of countering the influence of Tomas Galasek in midfield. But Galasek himself departed three minutes later, replaced by a forward, Marek Heinz, as the Czechs again changed formation and pressed forward.

Smicer's shot was pushed wide by Van der Sar before the Czech attackers combined brilliantly for the equaliser. Pavel Nedved's cross was chested down by Koller into the path of Baros, who thumped a volley into the top corner.

The game swung decisively in the Czechs' favour with 15 minutes left when Heitinga collected a second yellow card for a foul on Nedved, whom he had also fouled for his first. It seemed an innocuous challenge, but Advocaat conceded that a more experienced player would not have committed himself at such a critical stage of the match.

The increasingly influential Nedved, finding more and more space, saw a piledriver pushed away by Van der Sar, then hit the bar from 30 yards. But Heinz set up the winning goal. His long-range shot was pushed out by Van der Sar, Poborsky was first to the rebound, and squared for Smicer to tap in.

Even after a remarkable 92 minutes, Holland still had a chance to equalise, but substitute Rafael Van der Vaart, stretching, could only shoot wide.

Gavin Hamilton

SIDELINES

● Vladimir Smicer became the first player to score in three consecutive European Championship finals when hitting the

Record...Smicer

winner in the Czech Republic's 3-2 victory over Holland. He scored in the 3-3 draw against Russia at Euro 96, and twice against Denmark at Euro 2000.

Come on, ref!...Holland's Davids and Cocu question a decision v Latvia

June 23

HOLLAND 3 LATVIA 0

Dutch turn the screw

Holland booked a quarter-final with Sweden after doing what was expected against Latvia, for whom lightning did not strike twice.

Where Germany had struggled with the Baltic side's disciplined approach, Holland had Ruud Van Nistelrooy. The Latvians were clearly exhausted after playing above themselves against the Czechs and the Germans. The Manchester United forward took advantage, scoring twice to take him level with Wayne Rooney as the tournament's top scorer at the end of the group stage.

Latvia, who needed to win to have a chance of reaching the last eight, defended deep and in numbers. This left Philip Cocu, Edgar Davids and Clarence Seedorf free to mop up in midfield and prompt Dutch attacks down the flanks from Andy Van der Meyde and the impressive Arjen Robben.

Maris Verpakovskis went close in the second minute but that was the only time Latvia came near to threatening Holland's defence, in which captain Frank De Boer made his first appearance of the tournament.

At the other end, Cocu struck a sweet shot that keeper Aleksandrs Kolinko did well to turn round a post, Van Nistelrooy saw his effort cannon off Kolinko's chest, then Seedorf's 30-yard free-kick whistled just over the bar.

The breakthrough came courtesy of Davids' run into the area. Vitalijs Astafjevs tripped the Barcelona midfielder, and Van Nistelrooy rolled in the penalty as Kolinko dived the wrong way.

Van Nistelrooy added a second eight minutes later. Cocu nodded Seedorf's free-kick back across goal, and the Manchester United striker headed underneath Kolinko from close range.

Latvia began the second half with more purpose. Andrejs Rubins saw his shot pushed wide by keeper Edwin Van der Sar after a neatly-worked counter-attack, then Astafjevs fizzed a low shot just wide.

But soon normal service was resumed. Robben's shot bounced off Kolinko after the winger had danced his way through the defence, the keeper pushed away efforts from Van Nistelrooy, Van der Meyde and Reiziger, and Cocu thought he had scored when Kolinko spilled Seedorf's free-kick into his path but was ruled offside.

Substitute Roy Makaay added a third late on, and Dutch celebrations began in earnest in Braga's wonderful stadium when news filtered through that the Czech Republic had taken the lead against Germany. With Holland certain to win, only a German victory would have prevented them going through.

"We have to thank the Czechs for beating the Germans," said Cocu. "We heard from the crowd reaction and it gives you an extra push to keep going."

Gavin Hamilton

June 23

GERMANY 1 CZECH REP 2

Germans have nothing in reserve

The reason for German failure lay quite simply in their inability to score. Having gone into the break at 1-1 and needing to win to guarantee a quarter-final place, they laid siege to the Czech goal in the second half but without product.

Substitute Tomas Hubschman cleared off the line with his first touch, Michael Ballack shook a post and Bernd Schneider had a follow-up luckily saved by keeper Jaromir Blazek. But the killer instinct was lacking, as muted Germany manager Rudi Voller noted later. The outcry would, he knew, be deafening. The Germans had lost to a Czech team already sure of winning the group and who thus fielded their reserves – though manager Karel Bruckner objected to that interpretation. "We have no A or B team; only players of the Czech national football squad," he grumbled.

In a tangle...the Czechs do some last-ditch defending v Germany

"Good work," was how he pithily summarised his team's victory, which meant they were the only side in the tournament to win all three group games.

Bruckner put out only two of his starting XI from the Holland game – Martin Jiranek, who switched from central defence to right-back, and holding midfielder Tomas Galasek, who took over the captaincy in the absence of Pavel Nedved. But despite never having played together before in public the Czechs had a better idea of their duties than Germany's unbalanced, tactical mess.

Voller had expected only one Czech striker and set up Germany with three at the back and six in midfield. But Bruckner ran Jaroslav Plasil down the right. That forced left wing-back Philipp Lahm to retreat and left Torsten Frings as the lone wing-back, out of touch on the right. Pushing Bernd Schneider up to support striker Kevin Kuranyi also left the Germans exposed in central midfield, where Marek Heinz ran riot.

He provided the free-kick from which Jiranek almost stabbed the Czechs ahead after four minutes and, on 29, curled a delicious free-kick beyond keeper Oliver Kahn to level Michael Ballack's 21st-minute volley.

That goal, created by Bastian Schweinsteiger, had taken Germany briefly to second spot in the group but they had slipped back to third before half-time courtesy of the combined efforts of Heinz and Holland, up in Braga.

At half-time Voller brought on the promising Lukas Podolski and remodelled his midfield. Too late. Germany poured forward in vain, and Czech substitute Milan Baros took advantage after 76 minutes, striking the winner at the second attempt after Kahn had parried his first shot.

Keir Radnedge

Free ride...Advocaat

SIDELINES

● A group of Dutch fans clubbed together to buy Holland coach Dick Advocaat a plane ticket out of Portugal after the 3-2 defeat by the Czech Republic. "We collected the money in just three minutes," said Johan De Laat, who organised the whip-round at a camp site.

June 15 - Aveiro

Czech Republic 2 (Baros 73, Heinz 85)
Latvia 1 (Verpakovskis 45)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 21,744. **Ref:** Veissiere (Fra)

Czech Republic (4-1-3-2): Cech - Grygera (Heinz 56), Bolf, Ujfalusi, Jankulovski - Galasek (Smicer 64) - Poborsky, Rosicky, Nedved (c) - Baros (Jiranek 87), Koller.
Booked: none.

Latvia (4-4-2): Kolinko - Isakovs, Zemlinskis, Stepanovs, Blagonadezdins - Bleidelis, Astafjevs (c), Lobanovs (Rimkus 90), Rubins - Prohorenkovs (Laizans 72), Verpakovskis (Pahars 81).
Booked: none.

June 15 - Porto (Dragao)

Germany 1 (Frings 30)
Holland 1 (Van Nistelrooy 81)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 52,000. **Ref:** Frisk (Swe)

Germany (4-2-3-1): Kahn (c) - Friedrich, Worns, Nowotny, Lahm - Hamann, Baumann - Schneider (Schweinsteiger 68), Ballack, Frings (Ernst 79) - Kuranyi (Bobic 85).
Booked: Kuranyi, Ballack.

Holland (4-2-3-1): Van der Sar - Heitinga (Van Hooijdonk 74), Stam, Bouma, Van Bronckhorst - Cocu (c), Davids (Sneijder 46) - Van der Meyde, Van der Vaart, Zenden (Overmars 46) - Van Nistelrooy.
Booked: Cocu, Stam.

June 19 - Porto (Bessa)

Latvia 0
Germany 0
Att: 22,344. **Ref:** Riley (Eng)

Latvia (4-4-2): Kolinko - Isakovs, Zemlinskis, Stepanovs, Blagonadezdins - Bleidelis, Astafjevs (c), Lobanovs (Laizans 70), Rubins - Prohorenkovs (Pahars 67), Verpakovskis (Zirnis 90).
Booked: Isakovs, Astafjevs.

Germany (4-4-2): Kahn (c) - Friedrich, Worns, Baumann, Lahm - Schneider (Schweinsteiger 46), Hamann, Ballack, Frings - Bobic (Klose 67), Kuranyi (Brdaric 78).
Booked: Friedrich, Hamann, Frings.

June 19 - Aveiro

Holland 2 (Bouma 4, Van Nistelrooy 19)
Czech Republic 3 (Koller 23, Baros 71, Smicer 88)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 29,935. **Ref:** Mejuto Gonzalez (Spa)

Holland (3-4-3): Van der Sar - Stam, Cocu (c), Bouma - Heitinga, Seedorf (Van der Vaart 86), Davids, Van Bronckhorst - Van der Meyde (Reiziger 79), Van Nistelrooy, Robben (Bosvelt 59).
Booked: Seedorf, Heitinga x 2.
Sent off: Heitinga 75min.

Czech Republic (4-4-2): Cech - Grygera (Smicer 25), Jiranek, Ujfalusi, Jankulovski - Poborsky, Rosicky, Galasek (Heinz 62), Nedved (c) - Koller (Rozehnal 75), Baros.
Booked: Galasek.

June 23 - Braga

Holland 3 (Van Nistelrooy pen 27, 35, Makaay 84)
Latvia 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 27,904. **Ref:** Milton Nielsen (Den)

Holland (4-3-3): Van der Sar - Reiziger, Stam, De Boer (c), Van Bronckhorst - Seedorf, Cocu, Davids (Sneijder 77) - Van der Meyde (Overmars 63), Van Nistelrooy (Makaay 70), Robben.
Booked: none.

Latvia (4-4-1-1): Kolinko - Isakovs, Zemlinskis, Stepanovs, Blagonadezdins - Bleidelis (Stolcers 83), Lobanovs, Astafjevs (c), Rubins - Prohorenkovs (Laizans 74) - Verpakovskis (Pahars 62).
Booked: Lobanovs.

June 23 - Lisbon (Jose Alvalade)

Germany 1 (Ballack 21)
Czech Republic 2 (Heinz 30, Baros 77)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 46,849. **Ref:** Hauge (Nor)

Germany (3-3-3-1): Kahn (c) - Friedrich, Nowotny, Worns - Frings (Podolski 46), Hamann (Klose 79), Lahm - Schneider, Ballack, Schweinsteiger (Jeremies 86) - Kuranyi.
Booked: Nowotny, Lahm, Worns.

Czech Republic (4-2-3-1): Blazek - Jiranek, Bolf, Rozehnal, Mares - Tyce, Galasek (c) (Hubschman 46) - Plasil (Poborsky 70), Heinz, Vachousek - Lokvenc (Baros 59).
Booked: Tyce.

Ricardo outshines big-time Charlies

The unsung Portugal keeper is the shoot-out hero while Beckham and co fluff their lines

Well-spotted...Ricardo turns in celebration after scoring the decisive penalty

WHAT THEY SAID

● **Rui Costa**
"We were better from start to finish. I knew we could do damage through the middle. When I came on, I had two shots that went wide, but I kept plugging away until I scored."

● **Frank Lampard**
"We showed great character. Even though the lads were obviously knackered, we came back into it and then got beaten on penalties. It's the biggest kick in the teeth you can have in football at this level."

● **Luiz Felipe Scolari**
"We have done what we set out to do. Now we are dreaming of a lot more."

June 24

PORTUGAL 2 ENGLAND 2

(Portugal 6-5 on pens)

THE BUILD-UP to the tournament had been dominated by the star names. The likes of David Beckham and Luis Figo were on the covers of a thousand tournament guides, the superstars whose personalities and talents would inspire their teams to glory.

That was the theory. In the event the reputations of all the famous names on parade at Lisbon's magnificent Estadio da Luz counted for little. After 120 minutes of nerve-jangling, heart-stopping football, came the time when big-match mentalities, not big-time Charlies, would triumph.

Portugal only found their scoring touch once Figo had left the pitch, coming from a goal down to lead 2-1 deep into extra-time before Frank Lampard's equaliser five minutes from the end took the match to penalties.

So up stepped Beckham, only to repeat his dreadful miss against Turkey in the qualifiers by scuffing his spot-kick, the first of the shoot-out, sky-high.

And it was one of the least recognisable faces in Portugal's squad who was the hero of the night. Ricardo, the Sporting Lisbon goalkeeper who overcame the claims of dressing-room heavyweight Vitor Baia to establish himself as Portugal's number one, saved from Darius Vassell before himself converting the decisive penalty that took the hosts into the semi-finals.

Defeat on penalties, for the third time in five major tournaments, was a wretched way for England to depart. "To get over this will take more than 12 hours, more than 24 hours, much, much longer," said coach Sven Goran Eriksson. "Losing like we did is extremely hard. The squad did what they should have, but unfortunately it wasn't enough."

The truth was that England deserved to lose. Michael Owen had given his side the lead in the third minute with a wonderful piece of athletic opportunism, swivelling to flick the ball past Ricardo after Costinha had failed to cut out Steven Gerrard's through ball. But then England set out to defend their lead, and had to do so without Wayne Rooney from the 27th minute onwards after he suffered a foot injury.

The loss of the teenager, who scored four goals in the group matches and had given England's football an extra dimension, was a serious blow. He hobbled out, and England reverted to the sort of football that has proved their undoing in the past.

Eriksson had been concerned beforehand about the extra day's rest enjoyed by Portugal since the end of their group games. Certainly, England's midfield tired as the match progressed and made numerous mistakes. They gave the ball away with such alarming ease that it was a surprise it took Portugal until the 83rd minute to find an equaliser.

The scorer, Helder Postiga, was an even

Level terms...Helder Postiga (right) heads Portugal's equaliser

Disallowed...Campbell's goal was ruled out after Terry was deemed to have fouled Ricardo

bigger surprise – he was ridiculed at Tottenham last season and had been the questionable choice of Portugal coach Luiz Felipe Scolari to replace Figo after 75 minutes. The hosts' captain had enjoyed considerable possession, largely thanks to the work of the excellent Maniche, but his personal quest to score the goal of the tournament single-handedly had again proved fruitless.

Figo trudges off

Figo was replaced as he prepared to take a corner. He trudged off behind the goal and straight to the dressing-room. Postiga joined another substitute, Simao Sabrosa, in a four-man attack, alongside striker Nuno Gomes and the other winger, Cristiano Ronaldo. It was Simao who beat Beckham on the left to supply the cross that the unmarked Postiga headed past keeper David James to take the match into extra-time.

Eriksson complained afterwards that Portugal had had a lot of shots from outside the area, but had created few real chances. Yet it was from one of those long-range efforts that Portugal took the lead – Rui Costa, another substitute, hitting a thunderbolt that crashed in off the crossbar in the 20th minute of extra-time.

It was Portugal's sixth goal of the finals, and five of them had been scored by substitutes. But Scolari dismissed suggestions that he was merely a lucky coach, saying: "I have won 16 lucky titles in my career."

Yet Portugal could consider themselves lucky to even be contesting extra-time. In the last minute of normal time, Sol Campbell's header was ruled out, apparently for a John Terry challenge on the goalkeeper. "Sitting on the bench I thought it was a goal and looking on TV I still think it was a goal," said Eriksson. "But you can't do anything about it."

Yet despite their obvious tiredness and apparent sense of injustice, England showed great character to get back in the match. Their reward for resolute defending, particularly from full-backs Ashley Cole and Gary Neville and keeper James, was an equaliser five minutes before the end.

Typically, it came from a set-piece – the only chances fashioned in open play after the first half-hour were two half-hearted headers from Beckham. The captain provided the corner, John Terry headed down and Lampard turned sharply to fire home.

'To get over this will take more than 24 hours, much longer'

Sven Goran Eriksson

Beckham complained the following day that his third successive penalty miss for England had been as a result of the Luz pitch. "The night before the match we practised penalties at the other end and our feet kept giving way under us," he said.

England's dream, fuelled by the commercial frenzy back home, was ended when Ricardo beat James with the 14th kick of the shoot-out. But the Portuguese party was just beginning.

Gavin Hamilton

THE MATCH IN DETAIL

June 24 - Lisbon (Luz)

Portugal 2 (Helder Postiga 83, Rui Costa 110)

England 2 (Owen 3, Lampard 115)

Aet. HT: 0-1. 90mins: 1-1. Att: 65,000. Ref: Meier (Swi)

Portugal 6-5 on pens

	MIN	
	3	GOAL OWEN flicks past Ricardo after Costinha mistake. 0-1
Maniche volley tipped over	8	
	19	Owen shoots on to roof of net
	27	SUB Vassell for Rooney
	30	Ricardo saves Owen half-volley
	37	Gerrard BOOKED – trip on Deco
James punches Figo free-kick round post	42	
	45	G Neville BOOKED – push on Cristiano Ronaldo
	HALF TIME	
Costinha BOOKED – foul on Beckham	56	
	57	SUB P Neville for Scholes
SUB Simao for Costinha	63	
SUB Helder Postiga for Figo	75	
SUB Rui Costa for Miguel	79	
	82	SUB Hargreaves for Gerrard
GOAL HELDER POSTIGA header from Simao cross. 1-1	83	
Deco BOOKED – foul on Vassell	85	
	90	Campbell header past Ricardo disallowed for challenge on keeper
	EXTRA TIME	
	92	P Neville BOOKED – trip on Ronaldo
Simao and Maniche shots blocked	99	
Cristiano Ronaldo header, poked on by Postiga, cleared off line by Cole	109	
GOAL RUI COSTA shot rockets in off crossbar. 2-1	110	
	115	GOAL Beckham corner, Terry heads down, LAMPARD turns and shoots past Ricardo. 2-2
Ricardo Carvalho BOOKED – trip on Vassell	119	

PENALTY SHOOT-OUT (England first)

BECKHAM: MISS Wild skew over. 0-0 – DECO: hits right, James wrong way. 0-1

OWEN: low drive down middle. 1-1 – SIMAO: high to left, James wrong way. 1-2

LAMPARD: low down middle. 2-2 – RUI COSTA: MISS Shoots over. 2-2

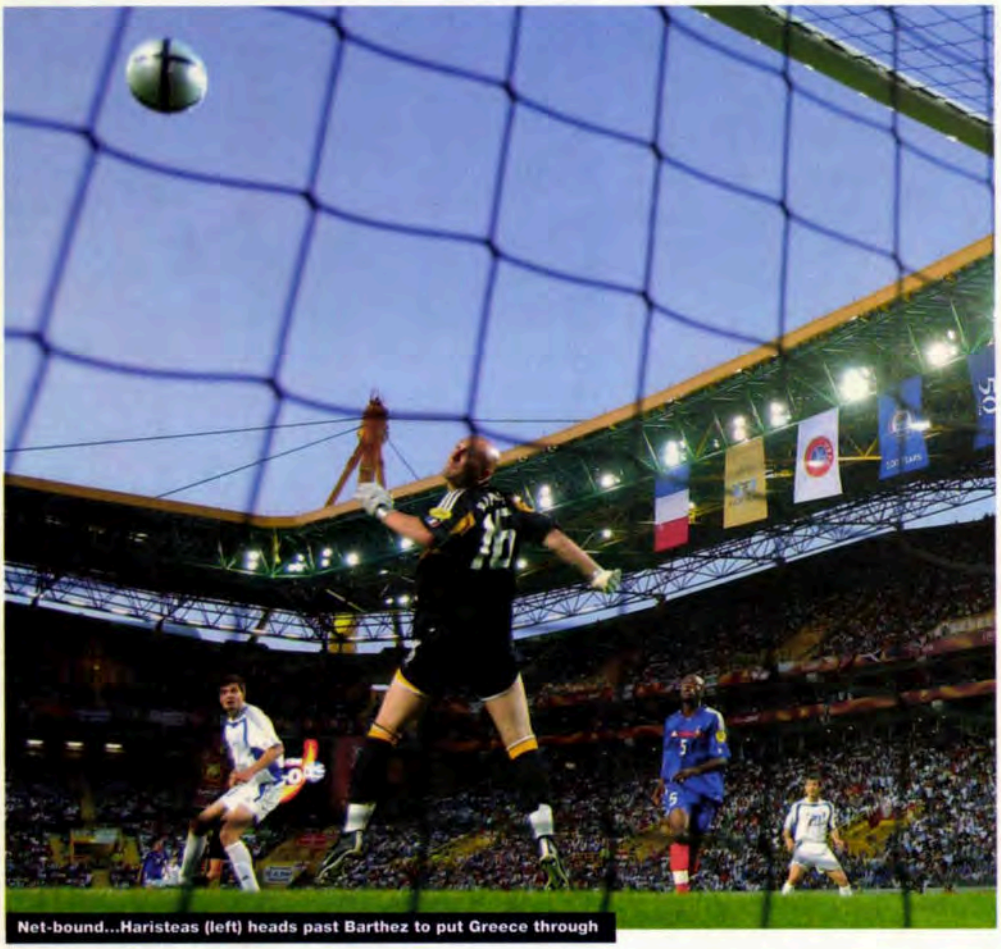
TERRY: high down middle. 3-2 – RONALDO: shoots to left, evades James. 3-3

HARGREAVES: confident shot to right. 4-3 – MANICHE: low to right. 4-4

SUDDEN DEATH

COLE: rolled to left. 5-4 – POSTIGA: cheeky chip. 5-5

VASSELL: SAVED Shot to right pushed away by Ricardo. 5-5 – RICARDO: low to left, past James. 5-6


Net-bound...Haristeas (left) heads past Barthez to put Greece through

French crash in cul-de-sac

The heroes of the 1998 World Cup and Euro 2000 reach the end of the road

June 25

FRANCE 0 GREECE 1

IF FRANCE HAD won the European Championship in Portugal they would have rewritten the record books since no team had ever successfully defended the trophy. Instead, history will record that the champions departed after suffering one of the biggest upsets the tournament has ever seen.

The group of players who won the World Cup together in 1998, and then peaked in 2000 at the last Euro finals, will now be contemplating retirement. Zinedine Zidane and Lilian Thuram both set a new tournament record by making their 14th finals appearance against Greece but they, along with the remaining members of the starting XI from the 1998 World Cup-winning side – Fabien Barthez, Bixente Lizarazu and Marcel Desailly – are unlikely to feature at the next World Cup in Germany, in two years' time.

From the very first kick of the match, this was a mystifying performance by France. For the kick-off, Zidane punted the ball aimlessly towards Greece's penalty area. The message to the Greeks was: here's the ball, show us what you can do, we're not sure if we can be bothered.

"Maybe we imagined we were better than we were," said France coach Jacques Santini afterwards. It was one of the more lucid comments from a man who had singularly failed to motivate his players.

For the entire first half, Santini's team played entirely without conviction. It was shadow football, with no feeling and very little effort. It was almost as if *Les Bleus* were waiting for Zidane to rescue them, just as he had done in stoppage time in the opening group game, against England.

France were missing Patrick Vieira, suffering a thigh strain, while Willy Sagnol's broken arm, sustained in the last group match, against Switzerland, forced yet another change in the defensive line-up. While any team would miss Vieira's driving force in midfield, France could not simply blame their failure on that.

Greece, who set out to contain France in the same way that they had pressed Portugal and Spain in their group games, found themselves with far more space in midfield than they could ever have imagined.

With Zissis Vryzas suspended, Greece coach Otto Rehhagel gave Demis Nikolaidis his first start of the tournament. The Atletico Madrid striker played as a fifth midfielder, breaking to support lone striker Angelos Haristeas whenever possible.

With Giorgios Karagounis back after suspension, Greece pressed hard in midfield. But they almost did not know what to do with the time and possession they got.

WHAT THEY SAID

Michel Platini
"France played exactly as they did in 2002 [in Korea/Japan], but they had Zinedine Zidane and luck this time."

Otto Rehhagel
"The French thought at first 'We're the best', and it was only later on that they noticed 'uh-oh'. And then they went to kick-and-run football and, oh, what a mess!"

Deflated...Henry contemplates defeat

France failed to get a shot on target in the first half. At the other end, Barthez saved shots from Nikolaidis and Panagiotis Fissas. The post came to the French keeper's rescue in the 15th minute, when an effort from Kostas Katsouranis from a Karagounis free-kick almost crept over the line.

France upped the tempo after the break, with Lizarazu making his presence felt on the left flank, while Zidane, who had never been comfortable in wide midfield, dropped back deeper in search of the ball. Thierry Henry sent a number of efforts high and wide; when he did manage to get a shot on target, Antonis Nikopolidis saved easily.

Greece sat back to soak up the French

attacks, and then countered with a killer blow as the French defensive weaknesses seen in previous matches reappeared. Angelos Basinas cleverly angled the ball out to his captain, Theo Zagorakis, on the right wing. Zagorakis flicked the ball over Lizarazu, drew Mickael Silvestre out of position and then crossed for Haristeas, unmarked, to head past Barthez.

Only now did Santini make changes. Louis Saha and Sylvain Wiltord replaced David Trezeguet and Olivier Dacourt. Yet it was only with the arrival of Jerome Rothen for Robert Pires with 11 minutes remaining – allowing Zidane to switch to a cental role – that France played with a balanced midfield.

Henry heads wide

With three minutes left, France had their best chance. William Gallas's cross found Henry unmarked in the area and the Arsenal striker hung in the air to strike a clear header. But the ball flew wide of the goal.

Santini made little sense in the post-match press conference. "Technically, our football was at its lowest level," he said. "We knew that we had to be more competitive to achieve the goals we set.

'Technically, our football was at its lowest level'

Jacques Santini

There was too much wasted technique, and at the end of the game we lacked lucidity."

The coach also blamed physical fatigue. "Some players have had two or three exhausting seasons with their clubs and they were unable to take any more."

But it was more the mental fatigue of having to live with the tag of tournament favourites that took its toll on the French.

There were no such problems for Greece, whose coach said: "This story will go round the world. I want to congratulate my players for this unbelievable victory, which was delivered with passion."

Gavin Hamilton

Up for grabs...Trezeguet and Dellas take to the air

THE MATCH IN DETAIL

June 25 - Lisbon (Jose Alvalade)
France 0
Greece 1 (Haristeas 65)
HT: 0-0. Att: 45,390. Ref: Frisk (Swe)

	MIN	
	6	Karagounis BOOKED – foul on Zidane
	14	Haristeas sets up Nikolaidis, whose shot is well saved by Barthez
	15	Katsouranis's header from a Karagounis free-kick bounces off a post to Barthez
Lizarazu cross, Henry heads wide	24	
	28	A Katsouranis volley is saved by Barthez
	37	Fissas chests down and volleys from long range, Barthez tips over
Henry run and weak shot deflected to keeper	43	
Zidane BOOKED – trip on Karagounis	44	
	HALF TIME	
Henry's acrobatic volley goes wide	49	
	50	Zagorakis BOOKED – foul from behind on Pires
	53	Basinas shoots wildly over from 40 yards out
Lizarazu crowded out after run into area	57	
Henry's cross headed off line by Kapsis	58	
	61	SUB Lakis for Nikolaidis
Henry shot after turn held by Nikopolidis	64	
	65	GOAL Zagorakis flicks ball over Lizarazu and crosses to unmarked HARISTEAS, who heads past Barthez. 0-1
SUBS Saha for Trezeguet, Wiltord for Dacourt	72	
Saha runs past three defenders but shoots weakly	75	
Henry shoots weakly again, from edge of area	76	
SUB Rothen for Pires	79	
	85	SUB Tsiartas for Basinas
Saha BOOKED – late challenge on Karagounis	86	
Henry's free header from a Gallas cross flies past a post	87	
Lizarazu runs into area but shoots over at second attempt	90	

Dutch beat shoot-out jinx

Advocaat's men hold their nerve to oust the Swedes

June 26

SWEDEN 0 HOLLAND 0

(Holland 5-4 on pens)

IT WAS A CASE of fifth time lucky for Holland. After being knocked out of the last three European Championships and the 1998 World Cup in penalty shoot-outs, the Dutch finally laid their bogey to rest in Faro when defeating Sweden 5-4 after a 0-0 draw.

For the disinterested neutral, this was a scoreless gridlock, short on quality, flowing football. For the connoisseur, it was a fascinating clash of styles as the solid, organised Swedes almost quashed a less-than-overwhelming Holland. For the Dutch and Swedish nations, it was a hot night of intense, heartbreaking drama.

First-round form had suggested that, unless the Dutch showed significant improvement, this might be a very tight affair. The improvement did not materialise, and Holland were unable to eclipse Sweden as Italy had done for an hour during their 1-1 group encounter.

Speaking after the game, both Dutch striker Ruud Van Nistelrooy and coach Dick Advocaat argued that Holland had deserved to win because, even if it had been a closely contested affair, they had played more football and had a more positive outlook.

From the Dutch viewpoint, that might be a fair assessment, but the Swedes would argue that they twice hit the woodwork in extra-time, with Henrik Larsson firing on to the crossbar and Freddy Ljungberg hitting a post. To counter that, the Dutch could point to a Van Nistelrooy extra-time goal that was disallowed because of a tight offside call.

The truth is that there was little between these two non-stratospheric teams, neither of whom deserved to get to a semi-final. Even if Van Nistelrooy once again showed himself to be a magnificent all-round striker, neither Andy Van der Meyde on the right nor Arjen Robben on the left were quite good enough to lay on the sort of supply that would have made the most of the Manchester United striker's devastating finishing ability.

Nor did Clarence Seedorf and Edgar Davids, substituted by Johnny Heitinga in the 61st minute, establish any form of midfield dominance, with their Swedish counterparts Anders Svensson, Tobias Linderoth and Ljungberg all giving as good as they got.

Even chances

The goal chances were evenly distributed throughout the game, with Seedorf, Philip Cocu and Van Nistelrooy for Holland, and Svensson, Larsson and Zlatan Ibrahimovic for Sweden all prompting good saves.

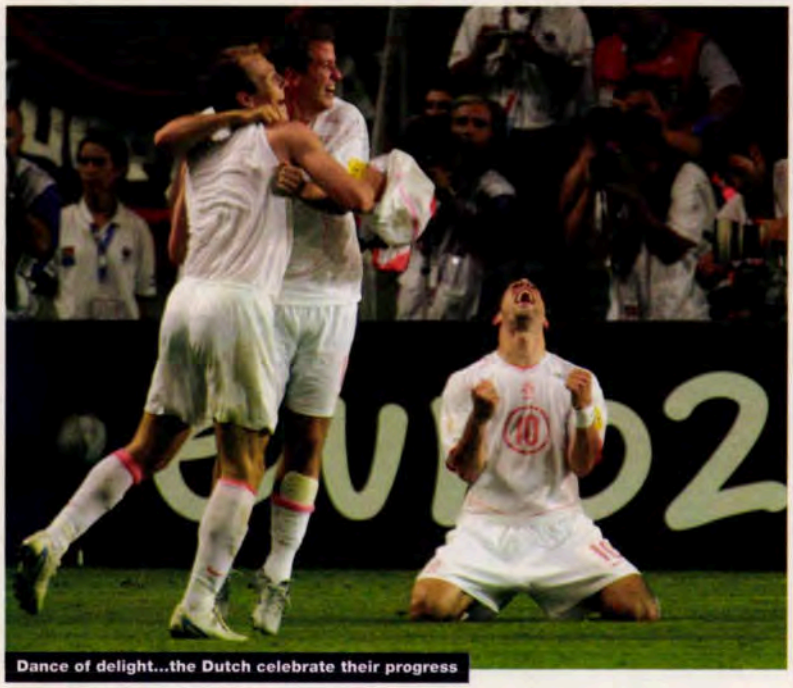
The longer the match went on, the less effective Van der Meyde and Robben became out wide, blocked in their path by full-backs Mikael Nilsson and Alexander Ostlund. The

WHAT THEY SAID

Dick Advocaat
"The atmosphere in the squad is absolutely great, everybody wants to do everything for each other."

Ruud Van Nistelrooy
"We, the Dutch, are not really known for being good at spot-kicks. This time we've turned it around."

Rolling on...Robben beats Isaksson from the penalty spot to put Holland in the semis



Dance of delight...the Dutch celebrate their progress

Up and over...Mellberg hurdles Ostlund

longer the match went on, the less space Larsson and Ibrahimovic found against a cautious Dutch defence for whom 'total football' is but a distant memory.

In short, despite much intriguing hustle and bustle, this was a match that had 0-0 written all over it from a long way out. So it proved. And so we went to penalties.

Perhaps crucially, the first side to miss were Sweden, when a tired Ibrahimovic put his shot, his country's third, over the bar.

Michael Reiziger took advantage, making it 3-2 to Holland. Next up was Ljungberg, whose shot bounced off the bar, off the back of Edwin Van der Sar and into the net.

When Cocu then hit a post to leave us on a 3-3 scoreline, one suspected that the Dutch shoot-out curse had come back to haunt them. Not so, however, for after substitutes Christian Wilhelmsson and Roy Makaay had both scored, it was Swedish captain Olof Mellberg who had the misfortune to see his shot parried by Van der Sar. That left Robben to deliver the *coup de grace*, scoring with the 12th kick of the night.

It was hard not to feel sorry for the Swedes. With the exception of Larsson and Ibrahimovic, they might be an ordinary side, but in Faro they had been every bit as good as Holland. Co-coach Lars Lagerback summed up much of the night's drama when saying: "Penalty shoot-outs are a question of centimetres. I don't know whether you call it luck or a lottery or what but it is really a very small margin and they can go one way or the other. It is always difficult in penalty shoot-outs but that's the way it is."

Paddy Agnew

'I don't know whether you call shoot-outs luck or a lottery'

Lars Lagerback

THE MATCH IN DETAIL

June 26 - Faro-Loule

Sweden 0

Holland 0

Att: 27,286. Ref: Michel (Slk)

Holland 5-4 on pens

	MIN	
	10	Robben cuts inside Nilsson, Isaksson dives to save
Larsson free-kick goes wide	25	
	30	De Boer BOOKED – foul on Larsson
	33	Cocu shot from 25 yards punched away by Isaksson
	36	SUB Bouma for De Boer
Van der Sar saves Svensson effort	45	
	HALF TIME	
	47	Corner. Van Nistelrooy's backheel flick goes just over
	48	Van der Meyde BOOKED – high challenge on Ostlund
Ibrahimovic's shot cleared off line	56	
Ibrahimovic BOOKED for diving	58	
	61	SUB Heitinga for Davids
	62	Van Nistelrooy chests down and shoots, goes wide off keeper
SUB Wilhelmsson for Jonson	65	
Ljungberg turns past Heitinga, shot flashes just wide	74	
SUB Kallstrom for Svensson	81	
	87	SUB Makaay for Van der Meyde
Ostlund BOOKED – foul on Robben	88	
	EXTRA TIME	
	92	Robben shot spilt on to post by Isaksson
	100	Seedorf shot from edge of area is pushed away
	107	Seedorf free-kick, diving save from Isaksson
	110	Van Nistelrooy shot beats Isaksson but called offside
Larsson shot hits bar	112	
Ljungberg shot comes back off inside of post	116	Makaay BOOKED – challenge from behind

PENALTY SHOOT-OUT (Sweden first)

KALLSTROM: low left. 1-0 – VAN NISTELROOY: high right. 1-1

LARSSON: blast down middle. 2-1 – HEITINGA: placed to right. 2-2

IBRAHIMOVIC: MISS Over bar. 2-2 – REIZIGER: placed low to right. 2-3

LJUNGBERG: in off bar and keeper's back. 3-3 – COCU: MISS Away off post. 3-3

WILHELMSSON: high to left. 4-3 – MAKAAY: rolled to left. 4-4

SUDDEN DEATH

MELLBERG: SAVED Shot right, Van der Sar parries. 4-4 – ROBBEN: rolled low to right. 4-5

Flying the flag...Koller is hugged by strike partner Baros after opening the scoring

Milan the man

Baros stars as the Czechs put Denmark to the sword

June 27

CZECH REP 3 DENMARK 0

MILAN BAROS TOOK over at the top of the marksmen's list by scoring twice in three minutes just after the hour – twice as many goals as he had managed in the Premiership in a disrupted season after he broke an ankle against Blackburn last September.

Baros had returned to the Liverpool side in February, was then omitted by manager Gerard Houllier, and had decided, privately, to focus on the Euro 2004 finals – sensing that Czech Republic coach Karel Bruckner, also his old Under-21 boss, had a higher opinion of him than the Frenchman.

"It was a difficult time for me," said Baros. "I had to work hard to get fit for both Liverpool and the European finals. Then what happened at Liverpool made me all the more determined to make sure I was ready for these finals."

Denmark's manager Morten Olsen was distraught that all his team's hard work in a goalless first half had been wrecked by defensive mistakes. He said: "We had a fantastic first half. The Czechs didn't know how to cope. But then within a few minutes of the restart we made a big mistake out of nowhere, and you can't afford to make mistakes like that at this level. It was terrible."

Olsen had hoped that Bruckner's decision to rest most of his first-choice players for the final group match against Germany would backfire, the thinking being that the Czechs would lose in rhythm what they had gained in rest and relaxation.

No such luck. The Czechs dominated the first 15 minutes, and it was the Danes who looked ring-rusty. Thomas Sorensen dived at his right-hand post to clutch an angled drive from Pavel Nedved, Baros mistimed a volley, Jan Koller headed over, and Tomas Galasek darted through from deep midfield to rifle a low drive wide of Sorensen's left-hand upright.

Koller, the tallest player at the finals, was looking for the goal that would take his international tally to 29 and put him into his country's all-time top three. He was duly presented with it four minutes into the second half when the Danish defence stood, leaden-footed, and allowed him to head home Karel Poborsky's right-wing corner.

Denmark had only ever beaten the Czechs once in 18 previous meetings and never in a competitive match. Their cause was hardly helped by the absence of front-runner Ebbe Sand, suffering from a thigh injury. But it was in defence that they lost this quarter-final. Czech skipper Nedved had called his Juventus team-mates, in particular goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon, for the inside track on the Danes, and the homework continued to pay off. First, Poborsky's delicate pass from out on the right caught the Danes wide open, and Baros skipped in happily towards Sorensen before cheekily flicking the ball up over the keeper with his right foot.

Two minutes later the 22-year-old showed the other side of his nature – and the strength of his other foot – as he hit a ferocious left-foot drive up into the roof of the net.

Nedved, this time, had provided the assist – with, perhaps, a little help from his friends.

WHAT THEY SAID

Karel Bruckner
"We had enough energy and power to come good because we preserved some energy against Germany. Our play was a bit different from the group games because it was a knockout match. You either win or lose at this stage, so there are no second chances. The fact we are in the last four is a success for us."

Over and in...Baros chips his first goal

Hopefully, Olsen's friends will tell him, gently, that Denmark were not up to the mark, yet again, when it came to the business end of the tournament. Emerging from the group phase in a World Cup or European Championship is one thing. Playing to win in the knockout section demands a different approach, a different mental attitude, a ruthless streak that the Danes lack.

The 3-0 beating by the Czechs followed the destruction, by the same scoreline, by England in the World Cup second round two years ago. Denmark appeared ignorant of the reality that quality opposition are likely to sharpen up and capitalise on slips that went unpunished in the group stage.

"We have to be self-critical," said Olsen. Perhaps that will mean accepting that there is another plane beyond the reach of the present Danish side. The team in which Olsen played in the 1980s had several senior international-class individuals. The same cannot be said for the present side. Jon Dahl Tomasson is head and shoulders above the rest, though Thomas Helveg and Thomas Gravesen are tireless in covering ground. But the attack lacked sparkle and variety, with Dennis Rommedahl looking fragile and Sand way below form even before injury ruled him out of the quarter-final.

The Danes managed only four goals in four games and, as Olsen noted, "football is all about scoring goals". An average of one a game is nowhere near good enough. France, England and Sweden all managed better than that and went no further than the Danes.

Keir Radnedge

'We made a big mistake out of nowhere. It was terrible'

Morten Olsen

Heads together...Jankulovski and Tomasson fight an aerial battle

THE MATCH IN DETAIL

June 27 - Porto (Dragao)
Czech Republic 3 (Koller 49, Baros 63, 65)
Denmark 0
HT: 0-0. Att: 35,000. Ref: Ivanov (Rus)

	MIN	
Nedved's free-kick comfortably saved by Sorensen	4	
Baros volleys wide, a half-chance from Jiranek's head-down	6	
Jankulovski BOOKED – late tackle on Helveg	10	
Koller heads over from Jiranek cross	12	
	14	Jensen cuts back to Poulsen but his shot is blocked by Ujfalusi
	19	Poulsen puts free header wide after Jensen free-kick
SUB Grygera for Jiranek	39	
Ujfalusi BOOKED – foul on Tomasson	45	
Poborsky's cross from byline clips top of crossbar		
	HALF TIME	
GOAL KOLLER outjumps Laursen at a Poborsky corner and heads in from eight yards. 1-0	49	
	51	Poulsen BOOKED – foul on Nedved
	56	Bogelund BOOKED – holding back Poborsky
	59	Tomasson layoff, Jorgensen cuts inside, Grygera blocks shot
Nedved BOOKED – foul on Gronkjaer	61	
GOAL Poborsky picks up ball on right, curls a pass to BAROS, who chips first time past Sorensen. 2-0	63	
SUB Rozehnal for Bolf	65	
GOAL BAROS runs on to Nedved's through ball, bursts pass Laursen, smashes shot high past Sorensen. 3-0		
SUB Heinz for Baros	71	SUB Madsen for Jensen
	72	Gronkjaer breaks into area, curls shot wide
	77	Gravesen BOOKED – foul on Heinz
		SUB Rommedahl for Gronkjaer
	78	Madsen puts free header over bar
Poborsky shoots wide after Nedved cutback	84	
	85	SUB Lovenkrands for Jorgensen
	86	Madsen heads wide from Gravesen cross

Figo crosses Final frontier

At last, the veteran of Portugal's 1991 World Youth Cup win earns his shot at senior success

Running the game...Figo gets past Van Bronckhorst during his fine semi-final performance

June 30

PORTUGAL 2 HOLLAND 1

EVER SINCE FRANCE triumphed on home soil in 1984, the trend had been for the European Championship hosts to fall at the semi-final stage. Germany in 1988, Sweden in 1992, England in 1996, Holland four years ago.

Not so Portugal. The momentum that had been building through the tournament carried them past Holland and into their first Final at a senior major tournament.

The date, June 30, was significant. Two years earlier to the day, current Portugal coach Luiz Felipe Scolari had led Brazil to triumph in the World Cup Final. More significantly, it was 13 years to the day that Portugal had won the Under-20 World Youth Cup. The team had included Luis Figo and Rui Costa; the venue had been the old Stadium of Light, less than a mile down the road from the Jose Alvalade, where the Dutch were defeated.

"I was a world champion in the Stadium of Light," said Figo. "Ever since then my goal has been to get my country to the Final of a senior tournament. I'm really very emotional."

Figo was the outstanding player on the night, yet had gone into the game under pressure to live up to his *galactico* reputation. The Real Madrid man had watched his side's quarter-final penalty shoot-out victory over England from the isolation of the dressing-room, having been substituted in the 75th minute. But if the feeling persisted that Figo's day in the sun had been and gone, the captain was having none of it. He gave his best performance of the tournament so far, teasing and stretching the Dutch defence with a series of brilliant runs.

The years may have taken the edge off Figo's pace, but he and Portugal's other winger, Cristiano Ronaldo, were at the heart of Portugal's victory. In the first half, the two wide men pegged Holland back, but Portugal again suffered from a lack of bite in front of goal. Three times Figo provided excellent crosses, only for his efforts to go unconverted.

In the end, Ronaldo turned poacher, rising unmarked to head home Deco's corner in the 26th minute. The goal was well deserved, given the efforts from Figo and Ronaldo, but Holland had their chances, too.

WHAT THEY SAID

● **Ruud Van Nistelrooy**
"It's unbelievable how the referee ruled everything in favour of Portugal. He was a real home whistler."

● **Luiz Felipe Scolari**
"I congratulate the players, they deserve it for their dedication. So do the people, whose support was fantastic."

Phil thrill...Scolari and his staff acclaim their passage to the Final

Marc Overmars had the time to steady himself when Edgar Davids' cross was headed on to him. But the Barcelona winger snatched at his volley and it flew over.

On the left wing, Arjen Robben was having a poor game by the high standards set earlier in the tournament, and was eventually booked for persistent diving.

Ruud complaint

Ruud Van Nistelrooy thought he had equalised when he turned on a pass from Overmars and shot past keeper Ricardo, but he was ruled offside. The Manchester United striker complained afterwards that referee Anders Frisk had favoured the home side, a comment that earned him a two-match ban from UEFA. But Frisk had made the correct decision.

Portugal finished the half the stronger, and nearly went in 2-0 ahead after Figo curled a powerful shot against the far post.

Pauleta missed a great chance early in the second half when he found himself clean through after Philip Cocu missed a long clearance from Ricardo. But the first-choice striker, who had returned from suspension to replace the injured Nuno Gomes, opted for power over placement and Edwin Van der Sar saved brilliantly with his legs.

Strike one...Ronaldo puts Portugal ahead

'My goal has been to get my country into a Final'

Luis Figo

But where Portugal's attack had failed, the midfield once again came riding to the rescue. Maniche collected Deco's short corner on the left, ran unchallenged to the corner of the penalty area, and curled an unstoppable shot just inside the far post.

Holland looked dead and buried but a slice of luck put them back in the match. Jorge Andrade swung a boot to stop Van Nistelrooy connecting with Giovanni Van Bronckhorst's cross, but instead sent the ball looping over Ricardo into the net.

Portugal held on, despite desperate efforts from the Dutch, who threw on an extra striker in Pierre Van Hooijdonk, but to no avail.

Scolari announced afterwards he had reached agreement on a two-year contract extension, a cue (though none was needed) for more wild celebrations in Lisbon.

Gavin Hamilton

THE MATCH IN DETAIL

June 30 - Lisbon (Jose Alvalade)
Portugal 2 (Cristiano Ronaldo 26, Maniche 58)
Holland 1 (Jorge Andrade og 63)
HT: 1-0. Att: 46,679. Ref: Frisk (Swe)

	MIN	
Figo crosses after run, Cristiano Ronaldo just fails to connect	9	
	12	Cocu shoots wide from outside penalty area
After Figo run and lay-back, Ronaldo shoots weakly	18	
GOAL Deco corner, RONALDO puts header past Van der Sar. 1-0	26	
Ronaldo BOOKED for taking off shirt during goal celebrations	27	
	28	Overmars blasts volley over bar
	31	Seedorf heads wide from Davids' cross
Maniche one-two with Deco, cross to Pauleta, sidefoot shot saved one-handed by Van der Sar	35	
	39	Van Nistelrooy shoots past Ricardo but is ruled offside Overmars BOOKED – protesting at offside decision
Figo cuts inside on right and shoots left-footed against far post	41	
Nuno Valente BOOKED – foul on Overmars	44	
	HALF TIME	
	46	SUB Makaay for Overmars
Long clearance falls to Pauleta but he blasts shot at keeper's legs	54	
	56	SUB Van der Vaart for Bouma; Cocu moves to centre-back
GOAL Deco short corner to MANICHE on left of area, curls shot inside Van der Sar's far post. 2-0	57	
	63	GOAL Van Bronckhorst crosses from left, JORGE ANDRADE loops ball over Ricardo into own net. 2-1
	65	Seedorf free-kick goes just wide
SUB Petit for Ronaldo	67	
	71	Robben BOOKED for diving
SUB Nuno Gomes for Pauleta	75	
Nuno Gomes tees-up Maniche, whose shot is blocked by Cocu	78	
	81	SUB Van Hooijdonk for Robben
SUB Fernando Couto for Maniche	87	
	89	Van der Vaart's shot is easily saved by Ricardo
Figo BOOKED – not retreating 10 yards at free-kick Deco shoots weakly at Van der Sar	90	Van Hooijdonk's free-kick rebounds off wall

Positive negative

The Greeks get the result after defending to the death

July 1

GREECE 1 CZECH REP 0

"THE FAIRYTALE CONTINUES," was how Greece coach Otto Rehhagel described his team's remarkable passage to the Final after their 'silver goal' victory over the Czech Republic.

The Greeks, 80-1 outsiders when the finals began, thus completed an unprecedented treble of victories over the hosts Portugal, holders France and now the favourites, the Czechs.

But this most astonishing achievement was achieved in a most mundane way, with tactics that were among the most negative in the tournament. At least Rehhagel was honest afterwards when he said: "Of course, the Czechs were very good and had more of the ball, but the best side doesn't always win."

On paper, Rehhagel's selection of three forwards looked more attacking than his formation in previous games. In practice, lone striker Zissis Vryzas and wingers Angelos Haristeas and Giorgios Karagounis rarely broke forward. It was a formation designed to stifle the Czech Republic's attacking qualities.

The Czechs had expected to find their attacking resources tested, but were probably not anticipating the closeness of the marking from defenders Giorgios Seitaridis and Michalis Kapsis, who stuck like glue to Milan Baros and Jan Koller respectively.

Meanwhile, Kostas Katsouranis was paying especially close attention to Pavel Nedved, fouling the Czech captain as early as the third minute as Greek intentions were made abundantly clear.

What chances the Czechs did create in the first half came from midfielders and defenders. Tomas Rosicky crashed a volley against the bar, then Marek Jankulovski twice forced Antonis Nikopolidis into sharp saves.

Nedved had injured his right knee just before the second of Jankulovski's efforts when trying to connect with a Karel Poborsky cross. The European Footballer of the Year struggled on for a few minutes before hobbling off in tears, his tournament apparently over regardless of whether his team made the Final.

Ironically, Nedved had only just demonstrated his worth with a run from his own half into the Greek penalty area. It took three defenders to crowd him out.

Despite the exit of Nedved, Greece continued to concentrate on their defensive responsibilities. Czech keeper Petr Cech had to be alert to push away a cross from Panagiotis Fissas, but that was the only Greek effort that went close to his goal in the first half.

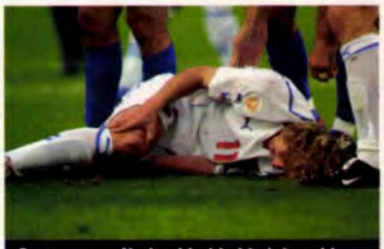
Czechs snuffed out

The second period was not much better for the neutral. Baros and Koller continued to find their efforts snuffed out by the Greek defence. When Baros finally succeeded in getting a shot on target, it came as a result of having hauled down his marker, Seitaridis.

WHAT THEY SAID

● **Milan Baros**
"We are all really disappointed at the way we lost. It is so hard to go out that way. I don't think the two best teams are in the Final, but congratulations to Greece."

● **Theo Zagorakis**
"We are not just a football team, we are mates, and as a Greek song says: 'History is made by mates.'"



Game over...Nedved holds his injured knee

Magic moment...Dellas and Katsouranis turn in triumph as the former's header finds the net to put Greece in the Final

THE MATCH IN DETAIL

July 1 - Porto (Dragao)
Greece 1 (Dellas 105 - silver goal)
Czech Republic 0
Aet. HT: 0-0. 90mins: 0-0. Att: 42,449. Ref: Collina (Ita)

	MIN	
	3	Koller heads on Jankulovski free-kick, Rosicky volleys against bar
	6	Jankulovski's shot is pushed around post by Nikopolidis
Seitaridis BOOKED – foul on Baros	23	
Fissas's cross from left is punched away by Cech	29	
	33	Jankulovski shot turned away by Nikopolidis
	40	SUB Smicer for Nedved
	44	Jankulovski lob lands on roof of net
	HALF TIME	
	48	Galasek BOOKED – foul on Haristeas
	55	Smicer BOOKED – trip on Haristeas
	59	Baros heads wide at far post from Poborsky corner
	60	Rosicky shoots wide after Koller lay-off
Vryzas heads straight at Cech from a Basinas free-kick	67	
	69	Poborsky pokes shot wide
Haristeas BOOKED – late tackle on Ujfalusi	70	
SUB Giannakopoulos for Basinas	72	
Vryzas heads wide from a Giannakopoulos corner	76	
	79	Poborsky's shot is held by Nikopolidis
	80	Brilliant run by Rosicky, but Koller shoots wide
	83	Baros shoots wide from inside area after Rosicky set-up
Karagounis BOOKED – foul on Smicer	87	
	EXTRA TIME	
SUB Tsiartas for Vryzas	91	
A Giannakopoulos header forces good save from Cech	94	
	102	Baros BOOKED – foul on Fissas
Dellas's clear header from a Tsiartas free-kick pushed away by Cech	103	
GOAL A Tsiartas corner goes over head of Smicer at near post, headed past Cech by DELLAS. 1-0	105	

Battle royal...Haristeas and Jankulovski contest a cross

As the game snaked towards extra-time, the Czechs started to find more space and chances, but their strikers were found wanting. First, Koller pulled a shot wide after working an excellent one-two with Rosicky. Then, Baros, also set up by Rosicky, manoeuvred his way into the area, but also fired wide.

In extra-time, the Greeks finally came out to play. There were chances for Stelios Giannakopoulos, Haristeas and Traianos Dellas before Dellas headed the goal with just seconds of the first 15-minute period left.

"I realised when we were given the corner that exactly 14 minutes 36 seconds of extra-time had been played," said Dellas. "I said to myself that now we must do it."

Vassilis Tsiartas curled in the corner from the right, Vladimir Smicer failed to clear at the near post, and Dellas headed in.

There was no time for the Czechs to restart. Pierluigi Collina, officiating his last major tournament game, blew up and in so doing ended the first match of the European Championship to be settled by a 'silver goal'.

The Czech players fell to the ground in despair, but coach Karel Bruckner was dignified in defeat. "I'm disappointed but this is not a bitter ending," he said. "I've been in the dressing-room and told the team I'm proud of every one of them, and our captain, Nedved, has told them this team is the best international side he's ever played with.

"I must congratulate Greece on their very clever tactical approach."

Greece had added the scalp of the tournament's best footballing side to their collection. A fairytale rematch beckoned – with Portugal, their group victims, in the Final.

Gavin Hamilton

'I told myself that we must do it now'

Matchwinner Traianos Dellas on his reaction to Greece gaining a corner seconds from the end of the first period of extra-time

THE SQUADS

BULGARIA

GOALKEEPERS
23 Dimitar IVANKOV (Levski Sofia)
12 Stoyan KOLEV (CSKA Sofia)
1 Zdravko ZDRAVKOV (Litex Lovech)

DEFENDERS
2 Vladimir IVANOV (Lokomotiv Plovdiv)
3 Rosen KIRILOV (Litex Lovech)
6 Kiril KOTEV (Lokomotiv Plovdiv)
18 Predrag PAZIN (Shakhtar Donetsk, Ukr)
4 Ivailo PETKOV (Fenerbahce, Tur)
22 Ilian STOYANOV (Levski Sofia)
5 Zlatomir ZAGORCIC (Litex Lovech)

MIDFIELDERS
7 Daniel BORIMIROV (Levski Sofia)
10 Velizar DIMITROV (CSKA Sofia)
15 Marian HRISTOV (Kaiserslautern, Ger)
13 Georgi PEEV (Kyiv Dynamo, Ukr)
8 Milen PETKOV (AEK Athens, Gre)
17 Martin PETROV (Wolfsburg, Ger)
19 Stilian PETROV (Celtic, Sco)

FORWARDS
9 Dimitar BERBATOV (Bayer Leverkusen, Ger)
20 Valeri BOJINOV (Lecce, Ita)
14 Georgi CHILIKOV (Levski Sofia)
21 Zoran JANKOVIC (Dalian Shide, Chn)
11 Zdravko LAZAROV (Gaziantepspor, Tur)
16 Vladimir MANCHEV (Lille, Fra)

Coach: Plamen MARKOV

CROATIA

GOALKEEPERS
12 Tomislav BUTINA (Club Brugge, Blg)
23 Joey DIDULICA (Austria Wien, Aut)
1 *Vladimir VASILJ (Varteks)

DEFENDERS
21 Robert KOVAC (Bayern Munich, Ger)
14 Mato NERETLJAK (Hajduk Split)
13 Dario SIMIC (Milan, Ita)
3 Josip SIMUNIC (Hertha Berlin, Ger)
2 Mario TOKIC (Grazer AK, Aut)
4 Stjepan TOMAS (Fenerbahce, Tur)
5 Igor TUDOR (Juventus, Ita)
6 Boris ZIVKOVIC (Stuttgart, Ger)

MIDFIELDERS
16 Marko BABIC (Bayer Leverkusen, Ger)
22 Nenad BJELICA (Kaiserslautern, Ger)
10 Niko KOVAC (Hertha Berlin, Ger)
15 Jerko LEKO (Kyiv Dynamo, Ukr)
7 Milan RAPAJIC (Ancona, Ita)
20 Giovanni ROSSO (Maccabi Haifa, Isr)
8 Dario SRNA (Shakhtar Donetsk, Ukr)

FORWARDS
17 Ivan KLASNIC (Werder Bremen, Ger)
19 Ivica MORNAR (Portsmouth, Eng)
18 Ivica OLIC (CSKA Moscow, Rus)
9 Dado PRSO (Monaco, Fra)
11 Tomislav SOKOTA (Benfica, Por)

Coach: Otto BARIC

CZECH REPUBLIC

GOALKEEPERS
16 Jaromir BLAZEK (Sparta Prague)
1 Petr CECH (Rennes, Fra)
23 Antonin KINSKY (Saturn Ramenskoye, Rus)

DEFENDERS
5 Rene BOLF (Banik Ostrava)
2 Zdenek GRYGERA (Ajax, Hol)
17 Tomas HUBSCHMAN (Sparta Prague)
6 Marek JANKULOVSKI (Udinese, Ita)
13 Martin JIRANEK (Reggina, Ita)
3 Pavel MARES (Zenit St Petersburg, Rus)
22 David ROZEHNAL (Club Brugge, Blg)
21 Tomas UJFALUSI (Hamburg, Ger)

MIDFIELDERS
4 Tomas GALASEK (Ajax, Hol)
11 Pavel NEDVED (Juventus, Ita)
20 Jaroslav PLASIL (Monaco, Fra)
8 Karel POBORSKY (Sparta Prague)
10 Tomas ROSICKY (Borussia Dortmund, Ger)
7 Vladimir SMICER (Liverpool, Eng)
19 Roman TYCE (1860 Munich, Ger)
14 Stepan VACHOUSEK (Marseille, Fra)

FORWARDS
15 Milan BAROS (Liverpool, Eng)
18 Marek HEINZ (Banik Ostrava)
9 Jan KOLLER (Borussia Dortmund, Ger)
12 Vratislav LOKVENC (Kaiserslautern, Ger)

Coach: Karel BRUCKNER

DENMARK

GOALKEEPERS
22 Stephan ANDERSEN (AB Copenhagen)
16 Peter SKOV-JENSEN (Midtjylland)
1 Thomas SORENSEN (Aston Villa, Eng)

DEFENDERS
2 Kasper BOGELUND (PSV Eindhoven, Hol)
6 Thomas HELVEG (Internazionale, Ita)
3 Rene HENRIKSEN (Panathinaikos, Gre)
5 Niclas JENSEN (Borussia Dortmund, Ger)
13 Per KROLDRUP (Udinese, Ita)
4 Martin LAURSEN (Milan, Ita)
18 Brian PRISKE (Genk, Blg)

MIDFIELDERS
7 Thomas GRAVESEN (Everton, Eng)
14 Claus JENSEN (Charlton, Eng)
15 Daniel JENSEN (Murcia, Spa)
12 Thomas KAHLENBERG (Brondby)
17 Christian POULSEN (Schalke, Ger)

FORWARDS
8 Jesper GRONKJAER (Chelsea, Eng)
10 Martin JORGENSEN (Udinese, Ita)
23 Peter LOVENKRANDS (Rangers, Sco)
21 Peter MADSEN (Bochum, Ger)
20 Kenneth PEREZ (AZ Alkmaar, Hol)
19 Dennis ROMMEDAHL (PSV Eindhoven, Hol)
11 Ebbe SAND (Schalke, Ger)
9 Jon Dahl TOMASSON (Milan, Ita)

Coach: Morten OLSEN

HOLLAND

GOALKEEPERS
1 Edwin VAN DER SAR (Fulham, Eng)
23 Ronald WATERREUS (PSV Eindhoven)
13 Sander WESTERVELD (Real Sociedad, Spa)

DEFENDERS
4 Wilfred BOUMA (PSV Eindhoven)
15 Frank DE BOER (Rangers, Sco)
18 John HEITINGA (Ajax)
2 Michael REIZIGER (Barcelona, Spa)
3 Jaap STAM (Lazio, Ita)
5 Giovanni VAN BRONCKHORST (Barcelona, Spa)

MIDFIELDERS
21 Paul BOSVELT (Manchester City, Eng)
6 Philip COCU (Barcelona, Spa)
8 Edgar DAVIDS (Barcelona, Spa)
20 Clarence SEEDORF (Milan, Ita)
14 Wesley SNEIJDER (Ajax)
11 Rafael VAN DER VAART (Ajax)
22 Boudewijn ZENDEN (Middlesbrough, Eng)

FORWARDS
9 Patrick KLUIVERT (Barcelona, Spa)
12 Roy MAKAAY (Bayern Munich, Ger)
16 Marc OVERMARS (Barcelona, Spa)
19 Arjen ROBBEN (PSV Eindhoven)
7 Andy VAN DER MEYDE (Internazionale, Ita)
17 Pierre VAN HOOIJDONK (Fenerbahce, Tur)
10 Ruud VAN NISTELROOY (Manchester Utd, Eng)

Coach: Dick ADVOCAAT

ITALY

GOALKEEPERS
1 Gianluigi BUFFON (Juventus)
22 Angelo PERUZZI (Lazio)
12 Francesco TOLDO (Internazionale)

DEFENDERS
5 Fabio CANNAVARO (Internazionale)
15 Giuseppe FAVALLI (Lazio)
6 Matteo FERRARI (Parma)
23 Marco MATERAZZI (Internazionale)
13 Alessandro NESTA (Milan)
3 Massimo ODDO (Lazio)
2 Christian PANUCCI (Roma)
19 Gianluca ZAMBROTTA (Juventus)

MIDFIELDERS
16 Mauro CAMORANESI (Juventus)
14 Stefano FIORE (Lazio)
8 Gennaro GATTUSO (Milan)
20 Simone PERROTTA (Chievo)
21 Andrea PIRLO (Milan)
4 Cristiano ZANETTI (Internazionale)

FORWARDS
18 Antonio CASSANO (Roma)
11 Bernardo CORRADI (Lazio)
7 Alessandro DEL PIERO (Juventus)
17 Marco DI VAIO (Juventus)
10 Francesco TOTTI (Roma)
9 Christian VIERI (Internazionale)

Coach: Giovanni TRAPATTONI

LATVIA

GOALKEEPERS
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7 Aleksandrs ISAKOVS (Skonto Riga)
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MIDFIELDERS
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8 Ruben BARAJA (Valencia)
19 JOAQUIN (Betis)
21 Juan Carlos VALERON (Deportivo La Coruna)
14 VICENTE (Valencia)
16 XABI ALONSO (Real Sociedad)
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FORWARDS
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9 FERNANDO TORRES (Atletico Madrid)
11 Alberto LUQUE (Deportivo La Coruna)
10 Fernando MORIENTES (Monaco, Fra)
7 RAUL (Real Madrid)

Coach: Inaki SAEZ

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23 Magnus KIHLSTEDT (FC Copenhagen, Den)

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19 Pontus FARNERUD (Strasbourg, Fra)
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20 Patrick MULLER (Lyon, Fra)
17 Christoph SPYCHER (Grasshopper)
5 Murat YAKIN (Basle)
13 Marco ZWYSSIG (Basle)

MIDFIELDERS
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7 Ricardo CABANAS (Grasshopper)
16 Fabio CELESTINI (Marseille, Fra)
18 Benjamin HUGGEL (Basle)
6 Johann VOGEL (PSV Eindhoven, Hol)
8 Raphael WICKY (Hamburg, Ger)
10 Hakan YAKIN (Stuttgart, Ger)

FORWARDS
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9 Alexander FREI (Rennes, Fra)
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Once Caldas organise surprise

Tim Vickery on how the tactically-astute Colombians became South American champions for the first time, while, over the page, he reviews the tournament's knockout phase

Champions...Once Caldas's Wilmer Ortegon hoists the Libertadores Cup

LIBERTADORES CUP

ONCE CALDAS BECAME only the second Colombian side to win the Libertadores Cup after beating defending champions Boca Juniors of Argentina on penalties after a 1-1 aggregate draw.

Boca's luck from the spot finally ran out. They won the World Club Cup on penalties against Milan last December, and in this competition came through both the quarter-finals and semi-finals by the same method. But in sight of their fourth Libertadores title in five years, they missed all four of their kicks. Rolando Schiavi leant back and shot over, Nicolas Burdisso crashed his effort against the bar, and Alfredo Cascini and Franco Cangele hit their penalties too close to keeper Juan Carlos Henao.

Once Caldas missed two – Arnulfo Valentierra and Wilmer Ortegon hitting straight at the keeper. But they scored their other two, Elkin Soto firing home left-footed – the only competent penalty of the series – and Jorge Agudelo shooting down the middle while keeper Roberto Abbondanzieri dived left.

And that was enough for them to become the champions of South America for the first time.

In last year's campaign Boca had no need of penalties. They won all their last seven matches in regulation time to claim the title in exhilarating style. They never found the same rhythm this time.

On paper the squad looked strong, but on the field Boca had little attacking penetration. Some of the veterans are in decline: striker Guillermo Barros Schelotto and midfielder Cascini have lost pace, while centre-back Schiavi seems less dominant in the air. The team have also lost the services of some of last year's heroes, who have

been sold and not adequately replaced – they include midfield all-rounder Sebastian Battaglia and striker Marcelo Delgado, whose pace and power down the flanks helped open up space for the dramatic emergence of Carlos Tevez.

In Delgado's absence Tevez was rarely able to make the same impression. Even so, with three goals he was still Boca's top scorer in the competition. He may soon be on his way to Europe. Defenders Burdisso, Luis Carlos Perea and Clemente Rodriguez are all definitely making the move, and a glorious chapter in the club's history seems to be coming to a close.

Once Caldas became champions in only their third participation in the Libertadores, and had never before made it out of the group stage. The club put themselves on a firm financial footing when they sold striker Edwin Congo to Real Madrid in 1999. But their triumph on the field is all the more remarkable because during the campaign they sold stalwart marksman Sergio Galvan to the USA's Major League Soccer.

Traditionally known as a ball-playing side, Once Caldas went through a drastic change of style. The name of the team translates as '11 from the province of Caldas', but it often seemed they had 20 players on the field, all of them doggedly engaged in defensive duties.

As luck would have it, they played all their first legs in the knockout stages away from home. This enabled coach Luis Fernando Montoya to use the same strategy time and time again – defend deep to frustrate the opposition and draw the first leg, then take a slightly more expansive approach at home. Twice they won by a single goal, and twice they came through on penalties.

Commanding defence

Experienced keeper Henao had an excellent tournament, showing a Rene Higuita-style combination of eccentricity and competence. The back four stayed compact, led by commanding centre-backs Samuel Vanegas and Edgar Catano. The packed midfield sought to draw the opposition forward and then have the gifted Valentierra slip a pass through to either one of the wide midfielders, the powerful, rangy John Viafara and the neat, technical Soto.

Away from home, striker Herly Alcazar was isolated and ineffective. Back in Manizales he had the support of the highly promising Dayro Moreno down the right, but still did little of note.

Very few players did anything of note in the first leg of the Final, in Buenos Aires. Boca had three players suspended – Tevez, Cascini and Fabian Vargas, their most dynamic midfielder. The Colombians, however, stuck with their defensive strategy rather than attempt to take advantage.

Their plan worked to perfection, although they had a couple of moments of luck in the first half – Boca's Daniel Barijho and Pablo Ledesma both hit the bar. Had either effort gone in then the remaining 135 minutes of the tie would certainly have been more interesting. But long before the end of the first leg Boca had run out of ideas. In fact, Once Caldas nearly snatched a late winner, Soto firing just over on the break then hitting the bar with a free-kick.

The return in Manizales' Palo Grande stadium got off to an exciting start, Viafara rifling the ball into the top corner from 30 yards after seven minutes.

Boca were rattled into losing their organisation, and for a while left themselves open on the break. Bit by bit the visitors found their way into the game, but failed to register a single serious shot in the first half. On the heavy pitch they struggled once more to break down the Colombian defence.

Coach Carlos Bianchi did the best he could in the circumstances. He moved talented left-footed striker Cangele out to the right with the aim of holding the ball and drawing free-kicks. The tactic brought Boca level and nearly won them the match.

Early in the second half centre-back Burdisso rose above Viafara to head a Cangele free-kick back across the box and into the net. And with a minute to go the same player was inches away from meeting another free-kick won and curled in by Cangele.

Tevez finally came up with a slalom dribble through Viafara and Vanegas, but saw his poked shot blocked by the leg of Henao. At the other end Abbondanzieri denied substitute Jefrey Diaz and Valentierra, and, right at the death, was relieved to see Soto's first-time shot fly just wide. The latter's next attempt was the penalty that put his team on the way to their shoot-out win.

Once Caldas's triumph means that Colombia can put in a claim to be the continent's third force behind Brazil and Argentina. And with only a single defeat in 14 games, the new champions proved themselves worthy ones.

This, though, was not a vintage Libertadores. Last year's event was so exceptional because of the emergence of the likes of Tevez and Brazilian Diego of Santos. Nobody of similar stature made the breakthrough this time, and the lack of inspiration meant sound organisation was enough to win South America's premier club competition.

STAR TURNS

Flying...Valentierra brought a touch of imagination to his side

ARNULFO VALENTIERRA (Once Caldas)

It was not Valentierra's Final. Injury forced him off before half-time in the first leg. Rushed back to action, he looked short of match fitness in the return and had a penalty saved in the shoot-out. Nevertheless, no one did more to decide the destiny of the Cup. Valentierra's imaginative playmaking brought a touch of flair to a side who otherwise would have been unbearably dull. He even weighed in with five goals; only two players managed more – Fernando Cavenaghi of River Plate (six) and Luis Fabiano of Sao Paulo (eight). Both are out-and-out strikers, but there is much more to Valentierra's game. He has a wonderful range of passing, and as he nears 30 he has become a better judge of options. The opposition knew perfectly well which option to take – when Valentierra was well marked, Once Caldas were not the same side.

Down to business...Abbondanzieri's form led to a national team call-up

ROBERTO ABBONDANZIERI (Boca Juniors)

At nearly 34 years of age, Boca's keeper finally came out of the shadows in this campaign. Abbondanzieri, who developed at Rosario Central, has been at Boca for seven years. He spent the first half of his spell as a reserve, and after becoming first choice was eclipsed by the achievements of the likes of Carlos Tevez at the other end. This, though, was his campaign. He saved two penalties in the Final, one in the semi against River Plate, and not only saved two in the quarter-final, against Sao Caetano of Brazil, but also blasted home the decisive spot-kick himself.

Public opinion swung behind his claims for an international call-up, and he made his Argentina debut against Paraguay in June. He was then included in the Copa America squad – a belated but fitting reward for years of solid service.

Buenos Aires blockbuster

THE SAME THREE countries as last year provided the semi-finalists for this season's Libertadores Cup. Defending champions Boca Juniors of Argentina made it through once more, overcoming local rivals River Plate in dramatic fashion to qualify for their fourth Final in five years. This time, though, the decider was against opponents from Colombia rather than Brazil.

Once Caldas from the city of Manizales fought their way through to the Final in only their third appearance in the competition. Their achievement again underlined the strength in depth of Colombian football, after Independiente Medellin and America de Cali reached the 2003 semis and Deportivo Cali produced a creditable campaign both this year and last.

Colombian joy was matched by disappointment for Brazil, whose teams dominated the tournament during the 1990s, but have yet to win a title in the current decade as European plunder of their talent takes its toll.

At the end of a second tight semi-final tie, Sao Paulo came within two minutes of taking Once Caldas to a penalty shoot-out. The Brazilians enjoyed more of the play. They had tournament top scorer Luis Fabiano looking sharp, and charismatic keeper Rogerio Ceni performing heroics with his saves and free-kicks. But with Kaka and Julio Baptista sold to Europe, coach Cuca confessed that he was losing both sleep and hair over the lack of quality in his midfield.

In control...Elkin Soto of Once Caldas keeps the ball away from Sao Paulo's Cicinho during the semi-final

Sao Paulo were content to play for penalties in the closing minutes in Manizales, with the aggregate score at 1-1. But Once Caldas made attacking changes, and two substitutes combined to give them a late winner, Javier Araujo piercing the defensive line to set up Jorge Agudelo, who cut inside and scored.

In the quarter-finals Once Caldas had ended the dreams of Santos, whose playmaker Diego and winger Robinho are spearheading the next generation of Brazilian talent. The 2003 runners-up were looking to go one better before the inevitable break-up of the side, but were hampered by backstage turmoil. Coach Emerson Leao was at loggerheads with the directors, and after shambolic defending away to LDU Quito of Ecuador he was replaced by Vanderlei Luxemburgo.

The team's fluid movement of the past two years gave way to a more rigid diamond midfield, which Once Caldas were able to contain. Their playmaker, Arnulfo Valentierra, produced one moment of magic in each leg, and Santos were out.

Luxemburgo began the competition in charge of Cruzeiro, whom he had just taken to Brazil's League and Cup double. Hopes of continued success were boosted when they signed Rivaldo. But they quickly collapsed under financial pressure, with the players angry that Luxemburgo had received his bonuses while they were being kept waiting. The coach resigned, and Rivaldo, who had not been assimilated into the team, went with him. The remnants fell in the second round to Colombia's Deportivo Cali, who played so well on the break in Belo Horizonte that a shoot-out should never have been necessary. Cruzeiro seemed to agree, and missed all their penalties.

Sao Caetano come close

The other Brazilian side, tiny Sao Caetano, consolidated their remarkable rise with another solid campaign. They too fell on penalties, in the quarter-finals, but came very close to eliminating Boca Juniors.

Boca coach Carlos Bianchi was undoubtedly correct when he described it as a meeting of two similar sides, both primarily concerned with teamwork and organisation. A low-scoring aggregate draw, 1-1, was a predictable result, and, as so often happens, Boca held their nerve to win the shoot-out.

Perhaps Sao Caetano had used up their supply of nerve overcoming America of Mexico in the previous round. It was a win that required every bit of their courage, tactical intelligence and technical ability. And it was greeted with a riot in the Azteca stadium, in part provoked by the antics of America's Cuauhtemoc Blanco.

The crowd tore down fences and found a number of wheelbarrows behind the goal which were then used as weapons against the police. The Sao Caetano players ran for shelter, and for a few minutes a tragedy seemed a real possibility.

The other Mexican side, Santos Laguna, were also eliminated in controversial circumstances, having taken River Plate to penalties in the second round. River's Daniel Montenegro had his kick saved, but the referee ordered a retake, ruling that Santos keeper Cristian David Lucchetti had moved. This was a bizarre decision since the ball had been struck straight down the middle.

River went on to win the shoot-out, then competently dispatched Deportivo Cali in the quarter-finals. With young stars Fernando Cavenaghi, Javier Mascherano, Maximiliano Lopez and Rubens Sambueza all hitting form, River prepared with confidence for their semi-final against Boca. In the event the two matches were more like cinema than football, with enough heart-stopping drama for a hundred Hollywood blockbusters.

Wild thing...Tevez put Boca ahead on aggregate in the semi-final but was sent off for his provocative celebration

As a security precaution away fans were banned from both legs, but it made little difference since the hooligans were on the field. In the first leg, at Boca, referee Claudio Martin had his yellow card out in the first minute. He soon lost control, and tried to regain it on the half-hour when he sent off Alfredo Cascini of Boca and Marcelo Gallardo of River.

Chaos ensued. The players refused to go, there was an eight-minute brawl, and Gallardo dragged his fingernails into Boca keeper Roberto Abbondanzieri, leaving him with blood streaming down his face.

By this stage Boca were a goal up, courtesy of centre-back Rolando Schiavi's diving header. But they failed to add to their advantage, even though River also lost Ariel Garce, sent off just before half-time for a dreadful lunging foul.

The second leg could only be better, and after a dull first half it exploded into an unforgettable hour. After the interval River's outstanding Luis Gonzalez switched flanks from left to right. Immediately he forced the expulsion of Fabian Vargas, Boca's most dynamic midfielder, and then levelled the aggregate score with a burst and cross-shot.

Boca became concerned exclusively with defence and time-wasting. River lost their heads, and Sambueza was sent off for swearing at a linesman. With three minutes left Boca sent on the gifted Franco Cangele, who went straight to the byline and pulled back for Carlos Tevez to fire in left-footed. The scorer took off his shirt, imitated a chicken, and was sent off by referee Hector Baldassi for his 'provocative' celebration.

Had he laid the golden goal to take Boca to the Final? No. Well into injury-time Cavenaghi's free-kick was flicked beyond the far post for the unmarked Christian Nasuti to turn in and force penalties.

The pressure mounted as shot after shot went in. Then Lopez struck River's fifth penalty poorly and at a comfortable height for Abbondanzieri to dive left and save. Javier Villarreal made no mistake with Boca's final spot-kick, and after winning a second successive shoot-out Boca were back in yet another Final.

One big party

Michael Church previews the Asian Cup finals and, over the page, gives his team-by-team guide

THE ASIAN FOOTBALL CONFEDERATION celebrates its 50th anniversary by holding the biggest ever Asian Cup, expanding the 13th finals tournament, in China, from 12 to 16 teams. Oman, Jordan and Turkmenistan all make their first appearances at the finals, which run from mid-July until August 7, fulfilling the AFC's desire that more of Asia's national teams should meet in a competitive environment.

The tournament will be the first major international sporting event to be held in China since the 1990 Asian Games and represents the first step towards the nation's hosting of the Olympic Games in Beijing in 2008. The capital's cavernous Workers' stadium will host the opening game, between China and Bahrain, as well as the majority of the other games in Group A, a quarter-final, a semi-final and both the third-place play-off and Final. The stadiums in Sichuan province's Chengdu and in the western port city of Chongqing on the Yangtze river have been purpose-built for the tournament, while Jinan in Shandong will host the remaining games.

Ready for the fun...an entertainer performs in front of the Asian Cup logo

Last time round...Japan captain Ryuzo Morioka lifts the trophy in 2000

However, FA vice-president Zhang Jilong was prompted to give guarantees that Chengdu's 40,000-capacity venue would be ready in time after fears that construction was behind schedule.

"Under the guidance of the LOC [local organising committee] and AFC, we are in control and all construction work is going smoothly and close to completion," insisted Zhang. "The government has given us great support in the building of both stadiums. Chengdu is a track-and-field stadium, while Chongqing is going to be a 32,000-capacity football-only stadium. There is no doubt in my mind that all four stadiums will be delivered come the start of the tournament."

Saudi Arabia will play all their Group C games in Chengdu as Gerard Van der Lem's team go in search of a record-breaking fourth continental title. But they face a tough group stage having been drawn with a revitalised Iraq and unpredictable Uzbekistan.

Holders Japan have finally found some form following several poor showings against Asian opposition earlier in the year. Narrow wins over Oman – who they face again in Group D in China – and Singapore in World Cup qualifying put coach Zico under pressure. However, a successful tour of Europe plus a 7-0 World Cup drubbing of India has changed the outlook for the Brazilian and his team, though they will go to the finals with a weakened squad.

While 2002 World Cup semi-finalists South Korea remain in turmoil in the post-Guus Hiddink years, China coach Arie Haan has made his side's aims clear. "We only have one ambition," said the Dutchman. "And that is to win the Asian Cup." That will be a first, for the host nation has never taken the title.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

Sought-after...Ali Karimi

Ali Karimi
(Iran)

Republic of Ireland fans will remember the fear Karimi's mercurial, mazy runs struck into the heart of their team's defence during the Europe-Asia World Cup qualifying play-off in November 2001. The national teams of Asia can expect similar collywobbles as Karimi, still among the continent's most naturally-talented and sought-after players, remains at the heart of the Iranian team. The 25-year-old turned down a number of European clubs, including Atletico Madrid, to stay closer to home, joining Al Nassr in Dubai. That should not have blunted his attacking edge and, with Ali Daei's powers waning, Karimi could become Iran's new leader.

Cutting edge...Tatsuhiko Kubo

Tatsuhiko Kubo
(Japan)

In the absence of star names such as Hidetoshi Nakata and Shinji Ono, Yokohama F Marinos striker Kubo could well be the man to steer Japan to Asian Cup glory. After a slow start to his international career, Kubo has been in fine goalscoring form since the turn of the year, hitting the vital winner against Oman in a February World Cup qualifier and striking again in Japan's surprise 1-0 friendly win over the Czech Republic in April. Quiet off the pitch, Kubo does his talking on the field, and with his movement and eye for the spectacular, the former Sanfrecce Hiroshima man has the ability to give Zico's team a cutting edge like few other Japanese strikers.

Expectations...Ahn Jung-hwan

Ahn Jung-hwan
(South Korea)

More responsibility than ever rests on the shoulders of Ahn following the retirement of Hwang Sun-hong and Hong Myung-bo, and the loss of key midfield trio Yoo Sang-chul, Kim Nam-il and Song Chong-gug to the Olympic team. The former Perugia striker has settled in quickly at Yokohama F Marinos, playing a major role in the club's J.League First Stage title success following his move from Shimizu S-Pulse during the close season. Now the Koreans will be looking for similar inspiration in China from Ahn, who has already proved he can perform in a major tournament following his exploits at the last World Cup.

Finals schedule

Group A

July 17	China v Bahrain (Beijing, 20:00)
July 18	Qatar v Indonesia (Beijing, 17:00)
July 21	Bahrain v Qatar (Beijing, 18:30)
July 21	Indonesia v China (Beijing, 21:00)
July 25	China v Qatar (Beijing, 19:00)
July 25	Bahrain v Indonesia (Jinan, 19:00)

Group B

July 19	South Korea v Jordan (Jinan, 18:30)
July 19	Kuwait v UAE (Jinan, 21:00)
July 23	Jordan v Kuwait (Jinan, 18:30)
July 23	UAE v South Korea (Jinan, 21:00)
July 27	Jordan v UAE (Beijing, 19:00)
July 27	South Korea v Kuwait (Jinan, 19:00)

Group C

July 18	Saudi Arabia v Turkmenistan (Chengdu, 18:45)
July 18	Iraq v Uzbekistan (Chengdu, 21:15)
July 22	Turkmenistan v Iraq (Chengdu, 18:30)
July 22	Uzbekistan v Saudi Arabia (Chengdu, 21:00)
July 26	Saudi Arabia v Iraq (Chengdu, 19:00)
July 26	Turkmenistan v Uzbekistan (Chongqing, 19:00)

Group D

July 20	Japan v Oman (Chongqing, 18:00)
July 20	Iran v Thailand (Chongqing, 20:30)
July 24	Oman v Iran (Chongqing, 18:00)
July 24	Thailand v Japan (Chongqing, 20:30)
July 28	Oman v Thailand (Chengdu, 18:15)
July 28	Japan v Iran (Chongqing, 18:15)

Quarter-finals

July 30	Gp C 1st v Gp A 2nd (Chengdu, 18:00) QF1
July 30	Gp A 1st v Gp C 2nd (Beijing, 21:00) QF2
July 31	Gp D 1st v Gp B 2nd (Chongqing, 18:00) QF3
July 31	Gp B 1st v Gp D 2nd (Jinan, 21:00) QF4

Semi-finals

Aug 3	QF1 winners v QF3 winners (Jinan, 18:00)
Aug 3	QF2 winners v QF4 winners (Beijing, 21:00)

Third-place play-off

Aug 6	Beijing, 20:00

Final

Aug 7	Beijing, 20:00

All times are local

TEAM-BY-TEAM GUIDE

Main man...China will rely heavily on veteran Hao Haidong's eye for goal

GROUP A

CHINA

China qualified for their first World Cup in 2002, where they lost all their three group games, against Costa Rica, Turkey and Brazil. But merely reaching the finals was a victory for a team that had a reputation for struggling to handle pressure situations, and much of the credit went to wily Serb coach Bora Milutinovic. Filling his shoes was always going to be a tough task for Dutchman Arie Haan, who took over in December 2002, five months after Milutinovic stepped down following the World Cup exit. However, after a stuttering start, Haan's team have recorded a number of impressive results, although they have been bailed out in recent World Cup qualifiers by veteran forward Hao Haidong. His goalscoring edge shows no sign of blunting, despite having taken over as player-coach of club side Dalian Shide, and he remains a key player in China's quest for a first continental title success. Manchester City's Sun Jihai and Shao Jiayi of 1860 Munich are also expected to play leading roles, but the loss of Everton midfielder Li Tie is sure to be a huge blow.

INDONESIA

Despite being one of South-east Asia's leading nations, Indonesia have yet to deliver at senior continental level. That is unlikely to change in China, where Hungarian coach Ivan Kolev oversees his final games in charge before being replaced by former Thailand boss Peter Withe.

BAHRAIN

Bahrain, without a finals appearance since 1988, have become one of Asian football's most improved nations since coming under the charge of coach Srecko Juricic, the assistant to Tomislav Ivic when the United Arab Emirates reached the Final of the 1996 tournament. After impressing in the Olympic qualifying tournament earlier in the year, Juricic's rugged, physical team will be pushing for a place in the knockout phase of the Asian Cup.

QATAR

Money may be no object to Qatar but the move by FIFA to block the federation's attempts to sign up Brazilians Ailton, Dede and Leandro is sure to have severely hampered the chances of Philippe Troussier's team. With such a small player pool, the Frenchman is unlikely to win back-to-back Asian Cups, having led Japan to the title in Lebanon four years ago. The main goal will be to reach the knockout phase.

GROUP B

SOUTH KOREA

The 2002 World Cup semi-finalists are in disarray as they continue to struggle to find a replacement for Guus Hiddink. The man viewed as his long-term successor, Humberto Coelho, decided to step down after the team's humiliating 0-0 draw away to the Maldives in a 2006 World Cup qualifier at the end of March. Since then the situation has gone from bad to worse. Park Sung-hwa was installed as interim coach before standing down after the 2-0 World Cup qualifying win over Vietnam in early June with the Korean FA in negotiations with a number of coaches to find a long-term successor. Former Senegal boss Bruno Metsu looked set to take the hot seat before talks reached an impasse, and, eventually, former Nigeria and Qatar coach Jo Bonfrere was plucked from obscurity to lead the Koreans at the Asian Cup. As a result of this drawn-out process, the Koreans have shifted their emphasis this year away from the Asian Cup towards the Olympic Games, with key senior national team midfielders Yoo Sang-chul, Kim Nam-il and Song Chong-gug being drafted in as the three overage players in the party for Athens. The loss of the trio will significantly weaken Korea's chances of capturing their first Asian Cup title since 1960, although they should still be good enough to reach the knockout phase.

KUWAIT

The days when Milan Macala led Kuwait to the semi-finals of the 1996 Asian Cup and to successive Gulf Cup triumphs in 1996 and 1998 are long gone. Neither Berti Vogts nor Paulo Cesar Carpeggiani were capable of continuing that run of success, and the Kuwaitis have now slipped further since losing talented players such as Jassem Al-Houwaidi. However, livewire striker Bashar Abdullah remains active and one of the most potent attackers in the Gulf region, while coach Mohammed Ibrahim's team is built largely on the Olympic side that qualified for the Sydney Games in 2000. Even so, they are unlikely to figure in the latter stages in China.

JORDAN

Since the arrival of Egyptian coach Mahmoud Al-Gohary, Jordan have become one of Asian football's rising powers. In June, they handed out a World Cup qualifying defeat to group favourites Iran, the second time in less than a year that they had defeated the regional powerhouse. The Jordanians could turn out to be the surprise package of the competition and should not be taken lightly.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Dutchman Aad De Mos has become the latest foreign coach to attempt to take the ever-expectant United Arab Emirates to success at continental level. Of his predecessors, only Tomislav Ivic has come close to achieving anything like success, when the Emirates reached the Final of the 1996 Asian Cup, which they hosted. De Mos has a talented pool of young players, many of whom played in the side that reached the knockout phase of last year's World Youth Cup. With less than two months to mould the team, the coach is more likely to find success in future events, but they should be battling with the Jordanians for runners-up place behind South Korea in the group.

Potent...Bashar Abdullah

GROUP C

SAUDI ARABIA

Saudi have qualified for the Final of the last five Asian Cup tournaments, and few would bet against them being involved in the latter stages again. Gerard Van der Lem's team successfully defended the Gulf Cup title in January,

securing their status as the region's No 1 side despite the loss of a number of key veterans. Striker Sami Al-Jaber is one of those to have departed the scene, while former Asian Player of the Year Nawaf Al-Temyat is still not fully recovered after several years blighted by a serious knee injury. In their place come players such as Talal Al-Meshal and Mohammed Al-Shlhoob, with midfielder Mohammed Noor providing the creativity. In goal, Mohammed Al-Daeyea, one of world football's most-capped players, has returned to the squad as Van der Lem seeks to mix youth and experience. His blend will be attempting to win a fourth title for Saudi Arabia, following success in 1984, 1988 and 1996.

Back after injury...Iraq's Emad Ridha Mohammed (in green)

IRAQ

Iraq's qualification for the Olympic Games showed that, despite more than a decade of United Nations sanctions and the continuing occupation by British and American forces, the country is still a footballing force. Bernd Stange's side has both physical presence and individual talent, and in forward Emad Ridha Mohammed, now back after a long-term injury, a player capable of winning matches. The battle with the Saudis and Uzbekistan for the quarter-final places will be intriguing, and the Iraqis could be in line to reach the knockout phase for the third tournament in a row.

UZBEKISTAN

The Uzbeks were expected to become a major power in Asian football after winning the gold medal at the 1994 Asian Games, the first tournament they attended after gaining membership of the Asian Football Confederation following the break-up of the Soviet Union. That has yet to happen, though a team boasting the talents of Kyiv Dynamo's Maksim Shatskikh and Lokomotiv Moscow pair Oleg Pachinin and Vladimir Maminov should be more than capable of making it out of the group phase. Nevertheless, as a team they remain something of an unknown quantity.

TURKMENISTAN

Turkmenistan have qualified for the first time after topping qualifying Group G ahead of the United Arab Emirates, Syria and Sri Lanka. But life is certain to be tougher in the finals for Rahim Kurbanmamedov's squad, most of whom play their club football in Kazakhstan. Turkmenistan struggled in their warm-up friendlies, against Armenia and Qatar, and a tough learning curve awaits.

GROUP D

JAPAN

The defending champions come into the tournament without twice Asian Player of the Year Hidetoshi Nakata through injury and Shinji Ono, another former winner of the continental award, after he opted to play in the Olympic Games instead. With Hamburg striker Naohiro Takahara following Ono's lead and midfielder Junichi Inamoto out with a broken leg, the fear is Zico's squad will be somewhat threadbare. At least the loss of Nakata is likely to make the Brazilian's selection policy more straightforward. Instead of continuing with his stuttering four-man midfield formation, Zico could well opt to go for a five, a line-up the players prefer and that gives Japan a more potent edge. Shunsuke Nakamura will look to impress as he did four years ago, while Tatsuhiko Kubo and Keiji Tamada should also add attacking power. Whether it will be enough to take the team all the way to a third Asian Cup title is debatable. What is certain is that much depends on how Zico, who will be coaching at a major tournament for the first time, deals with the pressure.

IRAN

No nation hungers after Asian Cup success more than Iran, who have not won the title since completing a hat-trick in 1976. They have come relatively close in more recent times. After the country emerged from its bloody, devastating eight-year war with neighbours Iraq in the 1980s, the Iran team reached the semi-finals in 1996 and went on to qualify for the 1998 World Cup with much the same squad. But the days of Ali Daei, Karim Bagheri and Khodadad Azizi – the trio that spearheaded Iran's revival – have passed, with only Daei remaining a regular in the starting line-up. The Iranians are undergoing something of a rebuilding phase but do have reigning Asian Player of the Year Mehdi Mahdavikia of Hamburg at the heart of the team and livewire talent Ali Karimi a permanent threat up front. Coach Branko Ivankovic, already under pressure to deliver because of the huge expectations of the football-mad fans back home, is now even more under the cosh following the recent defeat by Jordan in a World Cup qualifier.

THAILAND

The team's preparations were thrown into disarray after the resignation of Brazilian coach Carlos Roberto Carvalho following the 4-2 World Cup qualifying defeat by North Korea in Bangkok in June. The loss came after a period of indifferent form under Carvalho, who succeeded Peter Withe last autumn. The Thais achieved unprecedented success under the Englishman, winning two Tiger Cups and reaching the final phase of the Asian World Cup qualifiers for Korea/Japan. Since then, however, the team have slipped and only just squeezed into the Asian Cup finals after struggling in the qualifiers against Uzbekistan, Hong Kong and Tajikistan. The one bright point about Carvalho's reign was the return from international retirement of striker Kiatisuk 'Zico' Senamuang. But the forward's talents are unlikely to be enough to lead the Thais – due to be coached by Chatchai Paholpaet during the tournament – through to the knockout phase for the first time since 1972.

OMAN

Coach Milan Macala has worked his usual magic to turn the Gulf nation into one of the surprise packages of the regional game. The Omanis were pipped to the finals of this year's Olympics by Iraq and many members of that squad will compete at the Asian Cup under the watchful eye of the canny Czech coach. Goalkeeper Ali Al-Habshi is the nation's only overseas-based player but the hardworking and well-drilled team are tough to beat on their day. However, as with most young teams, inconsistency could cost them dearly.

Chance to impress...Nakamura

INTERNATIONALS

Friday, June 4

June 4 - San Carlos - friendly
Costa Rica 5 (Scott 19, Ledezma 30, W Parks 46, 57, A Solis 90)
Nicaragua 1 (Lopez 1)
HT: 2-1
Played behind closed doors

Saturday, June 5

June 5 - Copenhagen - friendly
Denmark 1 (Sand 56)
Croatia 2 (Sokota 27, Olic 39)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 30,843. **Ref:** Stuchlik (Aut)
Denmark: Sorensen - Helveg, Laursen, Henriksen (Kroldrup 69), N Jensen (Bogelund 87), D Jensen (Gravesen 46), C Jensen (Sand 46), Poulsen, Rommedahl (Perez 46), Tomasson (Madsen 73), Gronkjaer (Lovenkrands 83).
Croatia: Pletikosa - D Simic, R Kovac, Simunic (Tomas 72), Zivkovic, Mornar (Srna 46), N Kovac, Bjelica (Tokic 89), Sokota (Neretljak 89), Olic (Rosso 65), Prso (Klasnic 46).

June 5 - Amsterdam - friendly
Holland 0
Rep Ireland 1 (Robbie Keane 45)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 42,000. **Ref:** Dean (Eng)
Holland: Van der Sar - Reiziger (Heitinga 46), Stam, Bouma (Van Hooijdonk 84), Van Bronckhorst, Sneijder (Seedorf 46; Bosvelt 63), Cocu, Van der Vaart, Davids (Robben 66), Kluivert (Van der Meyde 46), Van Nistelrooy (Makaay 66).
Rep Ireland: Given - Finnan, Cunningham, O'Brien, Maybury, Barrett, Holland, A Quinn, A Reid (Doyle 88), Morrison (Lee 83), Robbie Keane.

June 5 - Setubal - friendly
Portugal 4 (Fernando Couto 3, Pauleta 13, Nuno Gomes 81, Helder Postiga 90)
Lithuania 1 (Vencevicius pen 74)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Wilmes (Lux)
Portugal: Ricardo - Paulo Ferreira (Miguel 57), Fernando Couto (Ricardo Carvalho 46), Jorge Andrade (Beto 71), Rui Jorge (Nuno Valente 46), Costinha (Tiago 64), Petit (Maniche 46), Figo (Cristiano Ronaldo 64), Rui Costa (Deco 46), Simao (Nuno Gomes 46), Pauleta (Helder Postiga 59).
Lithuania: Stauce - Dziaukstas, Dedura, Barasa, Zvirgzdauskas, Skarbalius (Tamosauskas 52), D Cesnauskis (Radzinevicius 60), Vencevicius, Razanauskas (Barevicius 71), E Cesnauskis (Mikoliunas 86), Poskus (Butrimavicius 76).

June 5 - Daegu - friendly
South Korea 2 (Yoo Sang-chul pen 66, Kim Eun-jung 77)
Turkey 1 (Hakan Sukur 44)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 45,284
South Korea: Kim Young-kwang - Yoo Sang-chul, Kim Chi-gon (Choi Jin-cheul 52), Cho Byung-kuk, Park Jin-sub (Park Yong-ho 73), Kim Nam-il, Kim Do-heon (Choi Sung-kuk 52), Kim Jung-woo, Kim Dong-jin, Kim Eun-jung, Cho Jae-jin (Ahn Jung-hwan 52).
Turkey: Volkan (Omer 46) - Umit Ozat, Bulent Korkmaz (Ibrahim Uzulmez 59), Serkan, Deniz, Tolga, Okan Buruk (Fatih Akyel 59), Basturk (Serhat 73), Hasan Sas (Tuncay 29), Hakan Sukur (Zafer Biryol 59), Nihat (Altintop 59).

June 5 - Getafe - friendly
Spain 4 (Morientes 25, Baraja 45, Cesar 65, Valeron 89)
Andorra 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 14,000. **Ref:** Trefoloni (Ita)
Spain: Casillas (Canizares 31; Aranzubia 62) - Puyol (Gabri 46), Ivan Helguera (Cesar 46), Marchena (Juanito 46), Raul Bravo (Capdevila 46), Etxeberria (Joaquin 46), Baraja (Xabi Alonso 46), Albelda (Xavi 46), Luque, Raul (Valeron 46), Morientes (Fernando Torres 46).
Andorra: Koldo (A Sanchez 83) - Ramirez (Ribolleda 90), Fernandez (Ferron 90), A Lima (Jimenez 89), I Lima, Txema (Escura 52), Ayala, Sivera (Garcia 86), Ruiz Gonzalez (Moreno 75), Sonejee (Jonas 66), J Sanchez (Riera 79).

June 5 - Stockholm - friendly
Sweden 3 (Larsson 42, Jakobsson 54, Allback 72)
Poland 1 (Gorawski 89)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 28,281. **Ref:** Kelly (Ire)
Sweden: Isaksson - M Nilsson, Mellberg (Mjallby 62), Jakobsson, Edman, Wilhelmsson (P Farnerud 75), Linderoth (Ostlund 62), Kallstrom (M Jonson 62), Ljungberg (Anders Andersson 62), Ibrahimovic (A Svensson 62), Larsson (Allback 62).
Poland: Dudek - Michal Zewlakow, Klos, Bosacki, Rzasa (Kaczorowski 75), Zurawski (Gorawski 86), M Lewandowski, Mila (Szymkowiak 59), Radomski (Kukielka 81), Krzynowek, Rasiak (Kosowski 59).

Sunday, June 6

June 6 - Teplice - friendly
Czech Republic 2 (Baros 6, 22)
Estonia 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 11,873. **Ref:** Brugger (Aut)
Czech Republic: Cech (Kinsky 46) - Grygera (Hubschman 46), Galasek (Mares 46), Jankulovski (Tyce 46), Jiranek (Rozehnal 72), Ujfalusi (Bolf 46), Poborsky (Vachousek 46), Roskicky, Nedved (Plasil 46), Koller (Smicer 46), Baros (Heinz 36).
Estonia: Kaalma - Allas, Rahn, Jaager, Klavan (Saviauk 74), Reim, Reinumae (Saharov 78), Lindpere, Viikmae, Zahhovaiko (Kristal 90), Kink (Teever 86).

June 6 - Saint-Denis - friendly
France 1 (Zidane 88)
Ukraine 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 66,646. **Ref:** Ceferin (Sln)
France: Barthez - Gallas (Sagnol 76), Thuram, Silvestre, Lizarazu, Pires (Wiltord 83), Makelele (Pedretti 83), Vieira, Zidane, Henry, Saha (Marlet 76).
Ukraine: Shovkovskyi - Rusol, Tymoshchuk (Venhlynskyi 90), Fedorov (Checher 78), Yeserskyi, Nesmachnyi, Husiev (Rebrov 61), Starostyak (Bidnenko 71), Shelaiev, Rotan (Nazarenko 84), Vorobei (Kosyrin 69).

June 6 - Kaiserslautern - friendly
Germany 0
Hungary 2 (Torghelle 7, 31)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 36,590. **Ref:** Bennett (Eng)
Germany: Kahn - Hinkel (Schweinsteiger 46), Worns, Nowotny (Baumann 62), Lahm, Schneider, Hamann (Ernst 84), Ballack, Frings, Klose (Brdaric 46), Bobic (Podolski 74).
Hungary: Kiraly - Bodnar, Juhasz, Stark, A Toth, Huszti (Bodor 90), Rosa, Szelesi, Leandro (B Toth 63), Gera (Gyepes 89), Torghelle.

June 6 - Riga - friendly
Latvia 2 (Verpakovskis 53, Zemlinskis pen 82)
Azerbaijan 2 (E Guliev 55, G Gurbanov pen 74)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 8,000. **Ref:** Maisonlahti (Fin)
Latvia: Piedels - Zirnis, Stepanovs, Zemlinskis, Blagonadezdins (Korablovs 62), Bleidelis (Lobanovs 46), Laizans (Mihalops 86), Astafjevs, Rubins, Verpakovskis (Stolcers 64), Rimkus (Prohorenkovs 46).
Azerbaijan: Kramarenko - Agaev, Sadigov, Shukorov, E Guliev, Amirbayov, M Gurbanov (I Gurbanov 75), A Mamedov, G Gurbanov (Abdullayev 90), Ponomarev, Vabiyev.

June 6 - Zurich - friendly
Switzerland 1 (Gygax 90)
Liechtenstein 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,200. **Ref:** Drabek (Aut)
Switzerland: Zuberbuhler - Haas (Berner 46), Henchoz (Zwyssig 46), M Yakin, Spycher (L Magnin 46), Gygax, Celestini (Cabanas 74), Wicky (Huggel 46), H Yakin, Frei (Vonlanthen 81), Chapuisat (Rama 81).
Liechtenstein: Jehle - Telser, Hasler, Ritter, Michael Stocklasa, R Beck (R Buchel 46), Martin Stocklasa, Gerster, Burgmeier (Martin Buchel 79), Frick, T Beck (Vogt 85).

June 6 - Port-of-Spain - friendly
Trinidad & Tobago 0
Northern Ireland 3 (Healy 4, 65, Elliott 41)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 5,500. **Ref:** Callender (Bar)
Trinidad & Tobago: Ince - Cox (Thomas 46), Sancho (Yorke 46), Boucaud (Baptiste 68), Edwards, Eve, Jemmot (Theobald 83), Andrews, Mason, S John, Rougier (Roberts 76).
N Ireland: Taylor (Mannus 82) - Baird, Capaldi, Craigan (Murdock 46), Williams, Johnson (Gillespie 72), Mulryne (Sonner 72), Whitley, Elliott (Jones 46), Healy (McVeigh 65), Quinn (Smith 61).

Friday, June 11

June 11 - Tallinn - friendly
Estonia 2 (Zahhovaiko 54, Teever 65)
Macedonia 4 (Sedloski 11, Popov 15, Pandev 31, Grozdanovski 65)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 2,200. **Ref:** Frojdfeldt (Swe)
Estonia: Kaalma - Saviauk (Kristal 46), Allas, Jaager, Klavan, Reim, Reinumae (Teever 54), Lindpere, Viikmae, Zahhovaiko, Kink (Saharov 50).
Macedonia: Milosevski (Nikoloski 46) - Popov (Vasoski 74), Sedloski, I Mitreski, A Mitreski, Trajanov (Grozdanovski 60), Pandev, Sakiri (Cadikovski 80), Dimitrovski (Bozinovski 46), Kumbev (Toleski 46), Jancevski (Mustafi 67).

Sunday, June 13

June 13 - friendly
Burkina Faso 4
Benin 2
HT: 1-2

June 13 - Praia - friendly
Cape Verde Islands 1 (Emerson 68)
Senegal 3 (Gueye 50, Kamara 55, 58)
HT: 0-0
Cape Verde Islands: Soares - Dario (Jai 84), Lolote, Ze Biquita, Boubista, Jimmy, Emerson, Janico, Lixa (Bruto 69), Lilo, Calo.
Senegal: Sylva (P M Diouf 46) - I Faye, Diawara (P M Diop 46), Seck (Diatta 46), Beye (Djiba 46), Sylvain N'Diaye (P Sarr 46), P B Diop, Abdoulaye Faye, Mendy (Kamara 46), Niang (H Camara 46), Moussa N'Diaye (Gueye 46).

Monday, June 14

June 14 - friendly
Ghana 0
Togo 0

Friday, June 25

June 25 - friendly
Mozambique 0
Ghana 1 (Gyan 72)
HT: 0-0

Sunday, June 27

June 27 - Miami, USA - friendly
Argentina 0
Colombia 2 (Moreno 21, Herrera 75)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Terry (USA)
Argentina: Cavallero - Ayala, Sorin (Placente 79), Quiroga (M Gonzalez 46), Heinze, Coloccini, Zanetti, D'Alessandro, Kily Gonzalez (Figueroa 76), Rosales, Saviola. *Sent off: D'Alessandro 66min.*
Colombia: Calero - Orozco, Diaz, Moreno (Murillo 69), Ferreira (Congo 88), Herrera (Gonzalez 90), Dinas, Aguilar, Patino, Victoria, G Martinez (Palacio 82).

Wednesday, June 30

June 30 - East Rutherford, USA - friendly
Argentina 2 (Kily Gonzalez pen 25, Saviola 72)
Peru 1 (Solano pen 36)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 41,013. **Ref:** Stott (USA)
Argentina: Cavallero - Quiroga, Ayala, Heinze, Sorin, Coloccini, Zanetti, Kily Gonzalez (Placente 90), M Gonzalez, Saviola (Figueroa 88), Rosales.
Peru: Ibanez - Vilches, Acasiete, Rebosio, Jorge Soto, J Garcia, C Zegarra (Salas 79), La Rosa, Solano (Galliquio 63; P Garcia 85), Maestri, Mendoza (Farfan 63).

COSAFA CASTLE CUP

Quarter-finals

June 13 - Maputo
Mozambique 2 (Mabedi og 42, To 62)
Malawi 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Kaoma (Zam)
Mozambique: Kapango - Dario Khan, Mano, Nando, Paito, Tomas, Nelinho, Gabito (Jotamo 75), Tico-Tico (Fala-Fala 71), Goncalves Fumo, To (Dominquez 89).
Malawi: Nyasulu - Msowoya, Mabedi, Mponda, Kamanga, Mwakasungala (Kumanga 46), Chilapondwa, Kondowe, Kamwendo (Munthali 70), Kanyenda, Mwafulirwa (Zakazaka 83). *Sent off: Msowoya 20min.*

June 27 - Mbabane
Swaziland 0
Zimbabwe 5 (Kasinauyo 7, P Ndlovu 41, 58, 81, Masangane og 54)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Infante (Moz)
Abandoned after 83mins when home fans began throwing missiles

Still to play:
Angola v Botswana (July 18)
Zambia v Mauritius (July 31)

WEST ASIAN CHAMPIONSHIP (WAFF CUP)

Staged in Tehran

Group A

June 17
Palestine 1 (Alkord 12)
Jordan 1 (Al-Shboul 3)
HT: 1-1

June 19
Iraq 2 (I Muhammed 41, 83)
Palestine 1 (Alkord 40)
HT: 1-1

June 21
Iraq 0
Jordan 2 (Mansour 48, Shelbaya 79)
HT: 0-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Jordan	2	1	1	0	3	1	4
Iraq	2	1	0	1	2	3	3
Palestine	2	0	1	1	2	3	1

Group B

June 17
Iran 4 (Daei pen 15, 62, 88, Nekoonam 80)
Lebanon 0
HT: 1-0

June 19
Syria 3 (Al-Rashed 7, Shekh Eleshra 27, Rafe 45)
Lebanon 1 (Zein 65)
HT: 3-0

June 21
Iran 7 (Daei 29, Vahedinikbakht 30, Nosrati 45, Borhani 55, 85, Karimi 86, Majidi pen 89)
Syria 1 (Sayed 82)
HT: 3-0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Iran	2	2	0	0	11	1	6
Syria	2	1	0	1	4	8	3
Lebanon	2	0	0	2	1	7	0

Semi-finals

June 23
Jordan 1 (Dheeb 21)
Syria 1 (Rafe 55)
HT: 1-0
Syria 4-3 on pens

Iran 2 (Nekoonam 4, Borhani 54)
Iraq 1 (Ahmed Abbas 30)
HT: 1-1

Third-place play-off

June 25
Jordan 3 (Al-Shaqran 27, 47, Abu Alieh 76)
Iraq 1 (I Muhammed 81)
HT: 1-0

Final

June 25
Iran 4 (Karimi 34, Daei 59, Borhani 69, Nekoonam 75)
Syria 1 (Rafe 3)
HT: 1-1

2006 WORLD CUP QUALIFIERS

AFRICA

5 finals berths

Teams play group rivals twice

Group 1

June 5 - Dakar
Senegal 2 (Diatta 59, Moussa N'Diaye 77)
Congo 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 18,000. **Ref:** Benouza (Alg)
Senegal: Sylva - Beye, I Faye, P Diop, P Sarr, H Camara, Sylvain N'Diaye, Gueye (Moussa N'Diaye 70), Amdy Faye (P Diop 79), Diatta, Niang (Kamara 46).
Congo: Mouko - Yoka, Diamesso (Tsoumou 62), Mvoubi, Kimbembe, Bouanga, Miyamou, Guie-Mien, Endzanga (Ntsika 86), Embingou (Bakouma 70), Ongoly.

June 5 - Lusaka
Zambia 1 (Mulenga 11)
Togo 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 40,000. **Ref:** Damon (SAf)
Zambia: Kakonje - Mulenga, Musonda, Mumba, Mwilima (Katongo 36), Bakala (Numba 53), Mbesuma (Mwila 76), Milanzi, Lungu, Sinkala, Billy Mwanza.
Togo: Tchagnirou - Adebayor, Z Atte-Oudeyi, Aziawonou Kaka, T Salou (Nibombe 53), Amewou, C-T Maman, S Maman (Senaya 63), Olufade, Akoto, Mamah.

June 6 - Monrovia
Liberia 1 (Kieh 85)
Mali 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Codjia (Ben)
Liberia: Seah - Kpoto, J Dixon, Teeklon, Seator (Kieh 53), Benson, Williams, Debbah, Daye (Tondo 77), Gebro (F Johnson 71), Laffor.
Mali: Mahamadou Sidibe - Diamoutene, A Coulibaly, Tamboura, Sissoko (Diallo 65), S Coulibaly, Chelle (D Sidibe 84), D Traore, B Diarra, S Traore, Kanoute.

June 19 - Bamako
Mali 1 (Kanoute 80)
Zambia 1 (Milanzi 25)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 19,000. **Ref:** Sowe (Gam)
Mali: Tangara - F Diawara, A Coulibaly, M Diarra, S Coulibaly, Diallo, Tamboura, B Diarra, Sissoko (S Traore 67), Kanoute, D Traore (Abouta 79).
Zambia: Kakonje - Mulenga (Katongo 64), Musonda, Chansa, Fichite, Milanzi, Lungu, Numba, Mumba, Phiri, Billy Mwanza.

June 20 - Brazzaville
Congo 3 (Bouanga 52, Mamouna-Ossila 55, Batota 66)
Liberia 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Ould Lemghambodj (Mra)
Congo: Mouko - Yoka, Diamesso, Ongoly, Kimbembe, Ewolo, Bouanga (Makita-Passy 84), Miyamou (Moukassa 62), Guie-Mien, Mamouna-Ossila, Embingou (Batota 46).
Liberia: Seah - Sonkaley, Kpoto, Wright, Teeklon, Forkey, Kieh (Vah 62), Tondo (Baryour 72), Barlee, Gebro, Laffor (Gobah 84).

June 20 - Lome
Togo 3 (Adebayor 30, Senaya 76, 85)
Senegal 1 (P Diop 81)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** El-Arjoun (Mor)
Togo: Agassa - Nidombe, Abalo, Adebayor, Z Atte-Oudeyi, Aziawonou Kaka, A G Maman, C-T Maman, Amewou (Akoto 70), Olufade (Senaya 69), M Salifou.
Senegal: Sylva - Beye, I Faye, P Diop, P Sarr, H Camara (Moussa N'Diaye 46), Sylvain N'Diaye (Abdoulaye Faye 46), Kamara, Gueye, Amdy Faye (P Diop 63), Diatta.

July 3 - Dakar
Senegal 1 (Gueye 21)
Zambia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 50,000. **Ref:** Monteiro Duarte (CVI)

July 4 - Brazzaville
Congo 1 (Mamouna-Ossila 30)
Mali 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Evehe (Cam)

July 4 - Monrovia
Liberia 0
Togo 0
Ref: Soumah (Gui)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Congo	3	2	0	1	4	2	6
Senegal	3	2	0	1	4	3	6
Togo	3	1	1	1	3	2	4
Zambia	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Liberia	3	1	1	1	1	3	4
Mali	3	0	1	2	1	3	1

Group 2

June 5 - Ouagadougou
Burkina Faso 1 (Zongo 79)
Ghana 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 25,000. **Ref:** Chukwujekwu (Nig)
Burkina Faso: Kabore - M Ouattara, Lamine Traore, A Toure (Zongo 54), A Coulibaly, Dagano, Alassane Ouedraogo (H Ouedraogo 72), T Barro (Kere 83), Kambou, Rouamba, Abdramane Ouattara.
Ghana: Kingston - Muntari (E Duah 60), Amankwa Mireku, S Kuffour, Mensah, Pappoe, L Adjei (Arhin Duah 78), Essien, Appiah, Boateng (Morgan 62), Obodai.

June 5 - Bloemfontein
South Africa 2 (Mabizela 40, 68)
Cape Verde Islands 1 (Martins 73)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Tessema (Eth)
South Africa: Vonk - Winstanley (J Zwane 82), A Mokoena, Mabizela, Morris (Molefe 66), Fish, Nomvete, Vilakazi, Van Heerden (Mhlongo 86), Buckley, Bartlett.
Cape Verde Islands: J Veiga - Barros, N Veiga, P Brito, Miranda (Gomes 60), Aguiar, Martins, Mendes (Furtado 76), Da Luz, Calo, Modeste.

June 5 - Kampala
Uganda 1 (Sekajja 75)
DR Congo 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 45,000. **Ref:** Maillet (Sey)
Uganda: Mugisha - Kizito, Tabula (Kadogo 67), Batabaire, Tenywa, Bajope (Ssozi 53), H Mubiru, Obua, Sekajja, Odoch (D Mubiru 75), Kasule.
DR Congo: Nkela - Ndiwa (Mulekelay 22), Tshiolola, Milambo, Kabamba, Kaluyitu (Mbala 74), Mubiala, Bageta, Ilongo, Nkulukuta, Nsumbu (Kamata 86).

June 19 - Praia
Cape Verde Islands 1 (Cafu 42)
Uganda 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Coulibaly (Mli)
Cape Verde Islands: J Veiga - Barros, N Veiga, P Brito, Miranda, Cafu, Aguiar (C Brito 88), Martins (Tavares 81), Da Luz, Calo (Gomes 65), Modeste.
Uganda: Mugisha - Kabagambe (Mwesigwa 67), Sekajja, Bagole (Tabula 83), Kasule, Bajope, Batabaire, Kadogo, D Mubiru, H Mubiru, Obua.

June 20 - Kinshasa
DR Congo 3 (Mbajo 12, Mbala 75, Bageta pen 88)
Burkina Faso 2 (Toure 26, Dagano 85)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Djaoupe (Tog)
DR Congo: Nkela - Nkulukuta, Mubiala, Tshiolola, Milambo, Mbajo, Kimoto, Bageta, Ilongo, Tutuana (Mbala 48), Kaluyitu (Kabamba 72).
Burkina Faso: Kabore - M Ouattara, Lamine Traore, A Coulibaly, Kere, Dagano, Alassane Ouedraogo, T Barro (Kone 80), Kambou, Tassembedo, A Toure (O Traore 63).

June 20 - Kumasi
Ghana 3 (Muntari 13, Appiah 55, 78)
South Africa 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Diatta (Sen)
Ghana: S Adjei - Quaye, Gyan, S Kuffour, Mensah, Pappoe, Essien, Appiah (Asampong 86), Muntari (Yahuza 63), Tiero, Tanko (Poku 80).
South Africa: Joseph - Lekgetho, A Mokoena, Mabizela, Morris, Fish, Koumantarakis (Raselemane 70), Pienaar, Mhlongo, Nomvete, Buckley (Van Heerden 60).

July 3 - Praia
Cape Verde Islands 1 (Modeste 26)
DR Congo 1 (Kaluyitu 2)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Nahi (IvC)

July 3 - Johannesburg
South Africa 2 (Pienaar 13, Bartlett 32)
Burkina Faso 0
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Ramanampamonjy (Mad)

July 3 - Kampala
Uganda 1 (Obua 45)
Ghana 1 (Gyan 88)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** El-Beltagy (Egy)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Africa	3	2	0	1	4	4	6
Ghana	3	1	1	1	4	2	4
DR Congo	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Cape Verde Is	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Uganda	3	1	1	1	2	2	4
Burkina Faso	3	1	0	2	3	5	3

Group 3

June 6 - Yaounde
Cameroon 2 (Eto'o 42, Song 45)
Benin 1 (S Tchomogo 11)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 40,000. **Ref:** Mbera (Gab)
Cameroon: I C Kameni - Perrier Doumbe, Wome, Song, Atouba, Feutchine (Djemba Djemba 65), Geremi, Tchato, Mbami, Tum (Webo 83), Eto'o.
Benin: Agueh - Bocco, Oketola (Osseni 63), Toklomety, Ogunbiyi (Youssouf 81), Adjamossi, Sessegnon, S Tchomogo, Ahoueya, Chrysostome, Seka (Amoussou 74).

June 6 - Abidjan
Ivory Coast 2 (Dindane 35, Drogba pen 63)
Libya 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 40,827. **Ref:** Colembi (Ang)
Ivory Coast: Tizie - Boka, Toure, Zokora, Blaise Kouassi, Guel (Demel 75), C Domoraud, Kalou, Die (Akale 46), Drogba (Kone 86), Dindane.
Libya: El-Ammi - Shushan, A Osman, El-Taib, Kara (K Mohamed 73), Abdussalah, Saftar, Hamadi, Boubakr, Al-Shibani, Elbeskini (Khamis 73).

June 6 - Khartoum
Sudan 0
Egypt 3 (Ali 6, Aboutraika 53, Abdel Wahab 88)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Kidane Tesfu (Eri)
Sudan: E M Abdalla - Abd Iaziz (Eldin Babiker 59), S Ahmed, Lado, Tambal (H El-Rasheed 46), B E Abdalla, Damar, Bustawi, El-Fatih (Maorouf 46), El-Bashir, Saeed.
Egypt: El-Hadary - Abdel Wahab, Abd Rabo (T El-Sayed 70), El-Saqqa, El-Shater, Moustafa, Shawki, Soliman (Emam 63), Al-Tabei, Ali (Ayed 84), Aboutraika.

June 18 - Misurata
Libya 0
Cameroon 0
Ref: Lim Kee-chong
Libya: El-Ammi - W Osman, Shushan, Suliman (Elbeskini 65), A Osman, El-Taib, Abdussalah (Rewani 86), Saftar (Senussi 60), Hamadi, Boubakr, Al-Shibani.
Cameroon: I C Kameni - Perrier Doumbe, Wome, Song, Atouba, Feutchine (Emana 60), Geremi, Mettomo, Webo (N'Diefi 65), Mbami (Makoun 86), Eto'o.

June 20 - Cotonou
Benin 1 (Ogunbiyi 31)
Sudan 1 (S Ahmed 45)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Guezzaz (Mor)
Benin: Agueh - Boco, Chrysostome, Oketola (Youssouf 60), Toklomety, O Tchomogo, Ogunbiyi, Adjamossi, Sessegnon, S Tchomogo, Ahoueya.
Sudan: Abdellah - Abdel Farag, Abd Iaziz, Ismail, S Ahmed (Maorouf 58), Lado (El-Fatih 35), Khalib, Kabir, Eldin Babiker (Saeed 73), Koku, El-Bashir.
Sent off: El-Bashir 83min.

June 20 - Alexandria
Egypt 1 (Aboutraika 55)
Ivory Coast 2 (Dindane 22, Drogba 75)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 13,000. **Ref:** Guirat (Tun)
Egypt: El-Hadary - Abdel Wahab, Abd Rabo, El-Saqqa, Ayed (A Hassan 81), Moustafa, Shawki, Al-Tabei, Ghali (T El-Sayed 78), Ali (Zaki 80), Aboutraika.
Ivory Coast: Tizie - Boka, Toure, Zokora, Guel, Kalou (Blaise Kouassi 72), Die (Toure 90), Tebily (Yapi 72), C Domoraud, Dindane, Drogba.

July 3 - Khartoum
Sudan 0
Libya 1 (Kara 90)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Bennett (SAf)

July 4 - Cotonou
Benin 3 (O Tchomogo pen 10, Ahoueya 45, Ogunbiyi 68)
Egypt 3 (A Hassan 66, 75, Moustafa 79)
HT: 2-0. **Ref:** Chukwujekwu (Nig)

July 4 - Yaounde
Cameroon 2 (Eto'o 80, Feutchine 82)
Ivory Coast 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Guezzaz (Mor)
Sent off: Zokora (Ivory Coast) 90min

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cameroon	3	2	1	0	4	1	7
Ivory Coast	3	2	0	1	4	3	6
Egypt	3	1	1	1	7	5	4
Libya	3	1	1	1	1	2	4
Benin	3	0	2	1	5	6	2
Sudan	3	0	1	2	1	5	1

Group 4

June 5 - Annaba
Algeria 0
Angola 0
Ref: Daami (Tun)
Algeria: Benhamou - Yahia (Aribi 23), Belhadj, Mansouri, Cherrad, Belmadi (Achiou 63), Arrache, Zafour, Kerkar (Badache 46), Ziani, Raho.
Angola: Joao Pereira - Jamba, Kali, Yamba Asha, Figueredo (Rats 89), Andre, Freddy, Maurito, Jacinto Pereira, Bruno Mauro (Chinho 90), Love (Flavio 58).

June 5 - Libreville
Gabon 1 (Nzue 52)
Zimbabwe 1 (Kaondera 82)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Quartey (Gha)
Gabon: B Nguema - Ambourouet, Nzeng, Nzue, Nzigou (Do Marcolino 63), S Nguema (Akieremy 63), Mbanangoye, Nsi Akoue, Moubamba (Londo 69), Issiemou, Moundoundga.
Zimbabwe: Murambadoro - Mpofu, Nyandoro (Choruma 67), B Ndlovu, Kapenya, Makonese, Nengomasha, Yohane, P Ndlovu, A Ndlovu, Luphahla.

June 5 - Abuja
Nigeria 2 (Martins 55, 88)
Rwanda 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Pare (BuF)
Nigeria: Enyeama - Yobo, Enakarhire, Abbey (Olajengbesi 79), Obodo, Ekwueme, Lawal, Olofinjana, Ogbeche (Dosunmu 75), Utaka, Martins.
Rwanda: Nkunzingoma - Ndikumana, Gasana, Bizagwira, M Kamanzi (Mulisa 58), Gatete (Lomani 54), Karekezi, Ntaganda (Sibomana 77), Makasi, Kizito, Gaseruka.

June 19 - Kigali
Rwanda 3 (Makasi 4, 64, Mulisa 27)
Gabon 1 (Zue 20)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 16,325. **Ref:** Abdulkadir (Tan)
Rwanda: Nkunzingoma - Ndikumana, Sibomana, Mulisa (Kakule 86), Mulenda (Bizagwira 46), Karekezi, Ntaganda, Makasi, Kizito, Gaseruka (M Kamanzi 46), Lomani.
Gabon: Ovono - Okogo, Nzeng (Tchicaya 78), Boutamba-Ibinga (Mve-Mintsa 46), Zue, Londo (Do Marcolino 46), Mbanangoye, Nsi-Akoue, Issiemou, Moubamba, Moundounga.

June 20 - Luanda
Angola 1 (Akwa 84)
Nigeria 0
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Nkole (Zam)

Angola: Joao Pereira - Jacinto Pereira, Jamba, Kali, Yamba Asha, Figueredo (Gilberto 54), Andre, Freddy, Akwa, Maurito (Cabungula 61), Bruno Mauro (Ze Kalanga 74).
Nigeria: Enyeama - Yobo, Obiefule, Enakarhire, Abbey, Aliyu (Olajengbesi 88), Ekwueme (Akaruye 81), Lawal, Olofinjana, Baita (Wahab 63), Utaka.

June 20 - Harare
Zimbabwe 1 (Raho og 59)
Algeria 1 (Cherrad 4)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Ntambidila (DRC)
Zimbabwe: Kapini - Mpofu, B Ndlovu (Kathana 70), Tembo, Nengomasha, Kaondera (A Ndlovu 87), Yohane, P Ndlovu, Dickson (Nyandoro 35), Sibanda, Luphahla.
Algeria: Benhamou - Belhadj, Yahia, Mansouri, Cherrad, Ghazi, Bezzaz (Belmadi 61), Bougherra, Ziani (Brahami 43), Achiou (Daoud 75), Raho.

July 3 - Libreville
Gabon 2 (Issiemou 44, Zue 49)
Angola 2 (Akwa 19, Marco Paulo 81)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 20,000. **Ref:** Louzaya (Con)

July 3 - Abuja
Nigeria 1 (Yobo 84)
Algeria 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Hisseine (Chd)

July 3 - Kigali
Rwanda 0
Zimbabwe 2 (P Ndlovu 41, Nengomasha 79)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Chilinda (Mwi)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nigeria	3	2	0	1	3	1	6
Zimbabwe	3	1	2	0	4	2	5
Angola	3	1	2	0	3	2	5
Rwanda	3	1	0	2	3	5	3
Algeria	3	0	2	1	1	2	2
Gabon	3	0	2	1	4	6	2

Group 5

June 5 - Blantyre
Malawi 1 (Munthali 35)
Morocco 1 (Safri 25)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 30,040. **Ref:** Mususe (Zim)
Malawi: Nyasulu - Kondowe, Chilaponowa, Mabedi, Kamanga, Mponda, Kamwendo, Kanyenda, Mwakasungula (Zakazaka 80), Mwafulirwa (Munthali 23), Msowoya.
Morocco: Fouhami - Regragui, Kacemi, Ouaddou, El Karkouri, Kaissi, Yaacoubi (Mokhtari 46), Safri (Kharja 75), Fahmi (Chihab 63), Chamakh, Y Hadji.

June 5 - Tunis
Tunisia 4 (Ribabro 9, Hagui 35, 79, Zitouni 74)
Botswana 1 (Selolwane 65)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 2,844. **Ref:** Abdel Rahman (Sud)
Tunisia: Fadhel - Badra, Hagui, Nafti (Seghayer 64), Mnari, Chedli, Benachour (Essediri 85), Jaidi, Jedidi, Braham (Zitouni 61), Ribabro.
Botswana: Marumo - Letsholathebe, Motlhabane (Molwantwa 63), Mothusi, Gabolwelwe (Moloi 83), Motlhabankwe (Moatiharing 87), Kgosiang, Selolwane, Amos, Kolagano, Gabonamong.

June 19 - Gaborone
Botswana 2 (Selolwane 7, Gabolwelwe 25)
Malawi 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Awuye (Uga)
Botswana: Marumo - Letsholathebe, Mogaladi, Ntshingane (Boleleng 67), Gabolwelwe, Motlhabankwe, Selolwane, Molwantwa (Moloi 76), Amos, Kolagano, Gabonamong.
Malawi: Sanudi (Nyasulu 76) - Kondowe, Chilaponowa, Mabedi, Kamanga, Mponda, Kamwendo, Mwakasungula (Nundwe 54), Mwafulirwa (Zakazaka 35), Msowoya, Munthali.

June 20 - Conakry
Guinea 2 (Diawara 12, 46)
Tunisia 1 (Braham 67)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Codjia (Ben)
Guinea: Kemoko Camara - Feindouno, Sow, Balde, Mansare, K Sylla, A Sylla (Mohamed Cisse 72), Morlaye Cisse (A Keita 64), O Camara, M Diallo, Diawara (Youla 64).
Tunisia: Boumnijel - Badra, Hagui, Yahia, Braham (Jedidi 75), Zitouni, Mnari, Bouazizi (Essediri 58), Chedli, Jaidi, Benachour (Seghayer 80).

July 3 - Gaborone
Botswana 0
Morocco 1 (Mokhtari 30)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 22,000. **Ref:** Dlamini (Swa)

July 3 - Lilongwe
Malawi 1 (Mpinganjira 71)
Guinea 1 (Diawara 80)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Abdulkadir (Tan)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Guinea	2	1	1	0	3	2	4
Morocco	2	1	1	0	2	1	4
Tunisia	2	1	0	1	5	3	3
Botswana	3	1	0	2	3	5	3
Malawi	3	0	2	1	2	4	2
Kenya	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Group winners qualify for finals

ASIA

4.5 finals berths

1st stage

Teams play group rivals twice

Group 1

June 9 - Tehran
Iran 0
Jordan 1 (Al-Shboul 83)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Kamikawa (Jap)
Iran: Mirzapour - Mahdavikia, Golmohammadi, Rezaei (Borhani 63), Nekoonam, Vahedinikbakht (Mobali 58), Kabei, Badavi, Nosrati, Karimi, Daei.
Jordan: Shafi Sabbah - Almaltaah, Al-Awadat, Bani Yaseen, Qasem, Shelbaya (Mahmoud 75), Mansour (Al-Shboul 66), Abu Alieh, Ibrahim, Akel, Al-Shaqran (Al-Zboun 72).

June 9 - Doha
Qatar 5 (Fazli 17, 37, W J Abdulla 69, 86, Bechir 89)
Laos 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 500. **Ref:** Abu Armana (Pal)
Qatar: A Abdulla - Fazli, Jadoua, Al-Khater, Bechir, Hassan (W J Abdulla 38), Al-Kathiri, W Ahmed, M Al-Blooshi (Moosa 46), Musa (Dad 58), Abdulmajid.
Laos: S Khanyyavong - Khotsombath, Xayavong, Chalana, Dalaphone (Bounthaiyavong 74), Phaphouvanin (Phachoumphon 90), Phothilath (Chanthalome 43), Phayvanh, Vongsamany, Namthavisay, Sanasith.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Jordan	3	3	0	0	7	0	9
Iran	3	2	0	1	10	2	6
Qatar	3	1	0	2	6	4	3
Laos	3	0	0	3	0	17	0

Group 2

June 9 - Amman, Jordan
Iraq 6 (Razak 2, 14, Husam 18, Ahmed Abbas 50, 85, Jassim 68)
Taiwan 1 (Huang Wei-yi 57)
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Al-Hail (Qat)
Iraq: Noor - Emad, Razak, Jassim, Husam (Abdul 74), Haydar, Ahmed Assad, Qussi (Said 53), Qusay, Ahmed Abbas, Mahdi (Rafed 46).
Taiwan: Yang Cheng-hsing - Chen Jeng-i, Tsai Hui-kai, Cheng Yung-jen, Wu Chun-i, Li Po-yuan (Chen Hstao-wei 46), Lin Kuei-pin, Chang Wu-yeh (Kuo Chun-yi 75), Tu Ming-feng, Cheng Sheng-jen (Chang Wei-lun 65), Huang Wei-yi.

June 9 - Tashkent
Uzbekistan 3 (Ashurmatov 6, Shishelov 42, Djeparov 89)
Palestine 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Moradi (Irn)
Uzbekistan: Polyakov - Ashurmatov, Kasimov (Djeparov 68), Akopyants, Soliev (Koshekev 85), Shishelov, Pashinin, Kadadaze, Karpenko (Tadjiyev 66), Alikulov, Nikolaev.
Palestine: Saleh - Jundiya, Beshe (Asad 50), Alkord, Montero, Amar (Abulatifa 78), Adauy, Mansour, Atura, Bakroon, Abusidu (Salama 41).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Uzbekistan	3	2	1	0	5	1	7
Iraq	3	1	2	0	8	3	5
Palestine	3	1	1	1	9	4	4
Taiwan	3	0	0	3	1	15	0

Group 3

June 9 - Saitama
Japan 7 (Kubo 12, Fukunishi 25, Nakamura 29, T Suzuki 54, Nakazawa 65, 76, Ogasawara 68)
India 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 63,000. **Ref:** Huang (Chn)
Japan: Kawaguchi - Tsuboi, Miyamoto (Ogasawara 62), Alex, Fukunishi, Ono (Fujita 70), Tamada, Kaji, Nakamura, Kubo (T Suzuki 46), Nakazawa.
India: Mukherjee - Rahaman, Lawrence (B Singh 62), Shanmugham, Renedy Singh, Ancheri, Biswas (Prakash 75), Naik, Mandal, J B Singh (Debabrata 46), Bhutia.

June 9 - Muscat
Oman 7 (Al-Maimani 9, 44, 64, 86, Ayil 25, 53, Hadid 39)
Singapore 0
HT: 4-0. **Att:** 2,000. **Ref:** Ebrahim (Bhn)
Oman: Subait - Rabee'a, Yousuf, Al-Maimani, Mohamed (Suroor 46), Bashir, Al-Mahrouqi, Ashoor, Ali (Al-Hinai 77), Hadid (Hubais 70), Ayil.
Singapore: Hassan - Muhamed (Fadhil 86), Iskandar, Khaizan, Daud, Noor Ali (Mohd 55), Rahman, Casmir, Bennett, Ishak (Zainol 67), Nasir.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Japan	3	3	0	0	10	1	9
Oman	3	2	0	1	12	2	6
India	3	1	0	2	2	12	3
Singapore	3	0	0	3	1	10	0

Group 4

June 9 - Tianjin
China 4 (Hao Haidong 43, Sun Jihai 62, Li Xiaopeng 66, 76)
Malaysia 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 35,000. **Ref:** Park (SKo)
China: Liu Yunfei - Zheng Zhi, Sun Jihai (Xu Yunlong 64), Zheng Bin (Yan Song 81), Wei Xin, Li Weifeng, Zhao Junzhe, Li Xiaopeng, Zhou Ting, Li Jinyu, Hao Haidong (Li Yi 68).
Malaysia: Syamsuri - Abd, Mohd Fadzli (Saravanan 78), Rohaimi, Mohd Khalid (Eddy 88), Irwan, Indra Putra, Kumar, Muhammad Kaironnisam (A Muhammad 69), Mohd Nizaruddin, Rosdi.

June 9 - Kuwait City
Kuwait 4 (Seraj 12, Al-Mutawa 38, Al-Enezi 45, Al-Dawood 75)
Hong Kong 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 9,000. **Ref:** Najm (Leb)
Kuwait: Kankouni - Y Abdullah, N Al-Shammari, Humaidan (K Al-Mutairi 65), Al-Buraiki (Jarragh 78), Al-Enezi, K Al-Shammari, Al-Mutawa (Al-Harbi 86), Seraj, Al-Dawood, N Al-Mutairi.
Hong Kong: Fan Chun-yip - Man Pei-tak, Ng Wai-chiu, Lau Chi-keung, Cheung Sai-ho, Wong Chun-yue, Szeto Man-chun (Poon Man-tik 71), Luk Koon-pong, Poon Yin-cheuk, Kwok Yue-hung (Lai Kai-cheuk 84), Chu Siu-kei (Akandu 67).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
China	3	3	0	0	6	0	9
Kuwait	3	2	0	1	6	1	6
Hong Kong	3	1	0	2	3	6	3
Malaysia	3	0	0	3	1	9	0

Group 5

June 9 - Bangkok
Thailand 1 (Kiatisuk 51)
North Korea 4 (Kim Yong-su 42, 71, Sin Yong-nam 52, Hong Yong-jo 67)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Tseytlin (Uzb)
Thailand: Kosin - Rungroj, Choketawee, Sarayoot (Manit 78), Thawatchai, Nirut (Preratat 69), Kiatisuk, Dusit, Datsakorn, Issawa, Pichitpong (Tawan 46).
North Korea: Sim Sung-chol - Ri Myong-sam, Ri-Kwang-chon, Jang Sok-chol, Mun In-guk, Kim Yong-su, Hong Yong-jo, Sin Yong-nam, Kim Chol-ho (Ji Yun-nam 41), Han Song-chol, Nam Song-chol. *Sent off: Kim Yong-su 77min.*

June 9 - Al Ain City
United Arab Emirates 3 (Abdulrahman 24, Omar 28, 73)
Yemen 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Sapaev (Tkm)
UAE: Salem - A S Jumaa, Abdulrahman, Omar, Rashid (S Khater 70), Saeed, Rashed, Matar, Fakher (O Mohamed 83), Qassim, S Khamis (Mubarak 66).
Yemen: Abdulkhaleq - Salem (Al-Wadi 25), Al-Fakih, W Abdullah (Saeed 88), Hussein, Eissa, F Ahmed, Yahya (Ghazi 57), Al-Nono, Al-Arami, Al-Zuraqi.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
UAE	3	2	1	0	4	0	7
North Korea	3	1	2	0	5	2	5
Thailand	3	1	0	2	4	5	3
Yemen	3	0	1	2	1	7	1

Group 6

June 9 - Muharraq
Bahrain 5 (A Hubail 12, 45, 60, H Ahmed 66, Duaij 82)
Kyrgyzstan 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 2,800. **Ref:** Al-Saeedi (UAE)
Bahrain: Abdulla - Al-Kawari, R Al-Dosari, H Ahmed (Duaij 81), Salmeen, F Mohammed, Basheer, T Mohamed (Jalal 77), Ghuloom, Adnan, A Hubail.
Kyrgyzstan: Djalilov - Amin, Salo, Sydykov, Chertkov (Kornilov 67), Prianishnikov (Samsaliev 46), Ishenbaev, Berezovsky (Holkovsky 69), Harchenko, Kudrenko, Philipas.

June 10 - Homs
Syria 2 (Al-Rashid 69, 80)
Tajikistan 1 (Kholomatov 34)
HT: 0-1. **Ref:** Al-Fadhli (Kuw)
Syria: Karkar - Dyab, Alhoussain (Kailouni 63), Al-Amnah, Sayed, Jenyat, Al-Rashed (Al-Rashid 46), Alkaddor (Alrefaiz 85), Shekh Eleshra, Esmaeel, Rafe.
Tajikistan: A Khabibulloev - Tabarov, Umarbaev (Khadjaev 77), U Khabibulloev, Kholomatov, Norkulov, Hamidov (Sharipov 83), Nasikhov, Oev, Muhidinov (Khakberdiev 70), Irgashev.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bahrain	3	2	1	0	7	1	7
Syria	3	1	1	1	4	4	4
Tajikistan	3	1	1	1	3	3	4
Kyrgyzstan	3	0	1	2	2	8	1

Group 7

June 9 - Beirut
Lebanon 3 (Zein 21, R Antar 87, Naserdeen 90)
Maldives 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 18,000. **Ref:** Nurilddin Salman (Irq)
Lebanon: Samad - Mohammed, Kinaan, Zein (Al-Jamal 66), Abbas Ali Atwi (Azar 89), A Al-Attar, Najarin, O Al-Attar, R Antar, Hamiye, Shahoud (Naserdeen 81).
Maldives: Imran Mohamed - Luthfee, Fazeel (Nizam 25), Jameel, Umar (Nasir 75), Ashfag, Ghani, I Ibrahim (Ismail Mohamed 51), Ghanee, Luthfy, Firaz.

June 9 - Daejeon
South Korea 2 (Ahn Jung-hwan 29, Kim Do-heon 61)
Vietnam 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 40,019. **Ref:** Al-Mehannah (Sau)
South Korea: Lee Woon-jae - Park Jin-sub, Choi Jin-cheul, Kim Nam-il (Kim Do-heon 46), Yoo Sang-chul, Kim Eun-jung (Seol Ki-hyeon 76), Lee Eul-yong, Kim Dong-jin (Kim Jung-woo 86), Ahn Jung-hwan, Park Ji-sung, Cho Byung-kuk.
Vietnam: Tran Minh Quang - Phung Van Nhien (Vu Duy Hoang 52), Pham Hung Dung, Le Hong Minh, Nguyen Minh Phuong, Nguyen Huu Thang (Le Cong Vinh 65), Le Huynh Duc, Phan Van Tai Em, Le Anh Dung, Le Quang Trai (Nguyen Van Dan 67), Thach Bao Khanh.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
South Korea	3	2	1	0	4	0	7
Lebanon	3	2	0	1	5	2	6
Vietnam	3	1	0	2	4	4	3
Maldives	3	0	1	2	0	7	1

Group 8

June 9 - Jakarta
Indonesia 1 (Aiboi 30)
Sri Lanka 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Nesar (Ban)
Indonesia: Kartiko - Setyabudi (Pulalo 87), Ardi, Aiboi (Ivak 84), Astaman, Budi (Aliyudin 69), Bachri, Saputra, Agus, Bambang, Sofyan.
Sri Lanka: Thilakaratne - S Mudiyanselage, Geegange, Chatura, Raheem, Edribandanage, Weerarathna, Mohamed, Isuru Perera, Fuard, Wewage.

June 9 - Riyadh
Saudi Arabia 3 (Al-Meshal 27, 45, Hawsawi 32)
Turkmenistan 0
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Khanthama (Tha)
Saudi Arabia: Zaid - A Al-Dosari, Al-Montasheri, Hawsawi, Al-Qahtani, Al-Abdali, Al-Abdullha, K Al-Dosari, Fallatah (Al-Qadi 34), Al-Meshal (S Al-Dosari 69), I Al-Shahrani (Marzouk 84).
Turkmenistan: Naboichenko - Meredov, Dourduev, Mingazov, O Berdiyev, Haydarov, V Bayramov, N Bayramov, Rejepov (Alikperov 75), Ovekov (Mirzoev 53), Kuliev (Nazarov 83).

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Saudi Arabia	3	3	0	0	7	0	9
Turkmenistan	3	2	0	1	5	4	6
Indonesia	3	1	0	2	2	6	3
Sri Lanka	3	0	0	3	0	4	0

Group winners advance to 2nd stage

2nd stage

The eight qualifiers are divided into two groups of four. The winners and runners-up of these groups qualify for finals. The two third-placed sides meet in a two-leg play-off, the winner of which meets the fourth-placed CONCACAF team in a play-off for a place in finals

CONCACAF

3.5 finals berths

1st stage

Group 1

June 13 - Columbus
United States 3 (Beasley 45, 71, Vanney 90)
Grenada 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 9,137. **Ref:** Navarro (Can)
United States: Keller - Cherundolo, Pope, Bocanegra, Vanney, Reyna, Armas (Lewis 73), Donovan, Beasley, McBride (Stewart 90), Casey (Kirovski 21).
Grenada: K Baptiste - A Modeste, F Baptiste, Benjamin (George 67), Phillip (B Bubb 75), Charles, Joseph, Bedeau, P Modeste, Roberts, Watts (Bishop 52).

June 20 - St George's
Grenada 2 (Roberts pen 12, Charles 77)
United States 3 (Donovan 6, Wolff 19, Beasley 76)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 15,267. **Ref:** Brizan (T&T)
United States 6-2 on agg
Grenada: K Baptiste - A Modeste, F Baptiste, Benjamin, Phillip (K Bain 59), Charles, B Bubb (Morris 89), Joseph (Neckles 65), Bedeau, P Modeste, Roberts. *Sent off: Benjamin 54min.*
United States: Keller - Hejduk, Mastroeni, Gibbs, Convey (Vanney 88), Reyna (Zavagnin 80), Armas, Donovan, Beasley, McBride, Wolff (Stewart 63).

Game 1
28.02.04 .....Grenada-Guyana 5-0
14.03.04 .....Guyana-Grenada 1-3
.....*Grenada 8-1 on agg*
Game 2
13.06.04 .....United States-Grenada 3-0
20.06.04 .....Grenada-United States 2-3
.....*United States 6-2 on agg*

Group 2

June 13 - San Salvador
El Salvador 2 (Jose Martinez 14, V Velasquez 54)
Bermuda 1 (Nusum 30)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Campos (Nic)
El Salvador: Rivera - Marvin Gonzalez, V Velasquez, Prado, Sanchez (Erazo 46), Gochez (Galdamez 81), Corrales (J M Martinez 66), Murgas, Pacheco, Torres, Jose Martinez.
Bermuda: Figuriedo - Richards, Burgess, K Jennings, Lewis, Steede, Ming, Lightbourne, K Smith, Nusum (Astwood 41; R Bean 77), Goater (C Smith 59).

June 20 - Hamilton
Bermuda 2 (Burgess pen 5, Nusum 21)
El Salvador 2 (Pacheco 19, pen 44)
HT: 2-2. **Att:** 4,000. **Ref:** Whittaker (Cay)
El Salvador 4-3 on agg
Bermuda: Figureido - Richards, Burgess, K Jennings, Lewis, Steede, Ming, Wade, Nusum, R Bean (C Smith 70), K Smith (Astwood 63). *Sent off: K Jennings 43min.*
El Salvador: Gomez - Carranza, V Velasquez, Prado, Gochez (Galdamez 82), Corrales (Campos 70), Ochoa (D Mejia 31), Murgas, Pacheco, Torres, Jose Martinez.

Game 1
29.02.04 .....Bermuda-Montserrat 13-0
21.03.04 .....Montserrat-Bermuda 0-7
.....*Bermuda 20-0 on agg*
Game 2
13.06.04 .....El Salvador-Bermuda 2-1
20.06.04 .....Bermuda-El Salvador 2-2
.....*El Salvador 4-3 on agg*

Group 3

June 12 - Miami, USA
Haiti 1 (Peguero pen 48)
Jamaica 1 (King 38)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Stott (USA)
Haiti: Fenelon - J-J Pierre, Bruny, Santcius, Gilles, Desir, Boucicaut (Gracien 79), Corriolan, Dorcelus (Romulus 87), Peguero, Descollines (Dieuphene 58).
Jamaica: Ricketts - C Davis, Stewart, Goodison, Reid, Ziadie, Hyde, F Davis (Whitmore 68), Gardner, King (Ralph 76), Fuller (Burton 88).

June 20 - Kingston
Jamaica 3 (King 4, 31, Bruny og 14)
Haiti 0
HT: 3-0. **Ref:** Sibrian (ElS)
Jamaica 4-1 on agg
Jamaica: Ricketts - Goodison, King, J Lawrence, A Williams (J Johnson 85), Whitmore, Gardner, Ralph (Fuller 80), Reid, Ziadie, C Davis. *Sent off: Reid 70min.*
Haiti: Fenelon - Gilles (Gracien 46), J-J Pierre, Corriolan, Peguero, Descollines, Boucicaut (Romulus 65), Bruny, Dorcelus (Lormera 46), Santcius, Desir. *Sent off: Desir 83min.*

Game 1
18.02.04 .....Haiti-Turks & Caicos Is 5-0
21.02.04 .....Turks & Caicos Is-Haiti 0-2
.....*Haiti 7-0 on agg*
Game 2
12.06.04 .....Haiti-Jamaica 1-1
20.06.04 .....Jamaica-Haiti 3-0
.....*Jamaica 4-1 on agg*

Group 4

June 13 - Panama City
Panama 4 (Julio Dely Valdes 5, Tejada 18, Phillips 39, Brown 75)
St Lucia 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 15,000. **Ref:** Phillip (Grn)
Panama: James - Miranda, Baloy, Henriquez (Blanco 42), Rivera, Gomez, Mitre, Tejada (Zapata 61), Julio Dely Valdez, Medina, Phillips (Brown 46).
St Lucia: Deterville - Polius, Lastic, E Joseph, Mark, Jean, Skeete (Alcide 87), Elva, Valcin (Samuel 53), Baptiste (Tobie 55), Emmanuel.

June 20 - Vieux Fort
St Lucia 0
Panama 3 (Tejada 14, Julio Dely Valdes 88, Blanco 90)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 400. **Ref:** Gurley
Panama 7-0 on agg
St Lucia: Deterville - Polius (Valcin 85), Lastic, E Joseph, Tobie, Mark, Jean (Walter 59), Elva (Skeete 65), Flavius, Samuel, Emmanuel. *Sent off: Emmanuel 59min.*
Panama: James - Miranda, Baloy, Henriquez, Rivera, Gomez, Blanco, Tejada (Ramos 75), Julio Dely Valdes, Medina (Lombardo 71), Phillips (Brown 58).

Game 1
22.02.04 .....British Virgin Is-St Lucia 0-1
28.03.04 .....St Lucia-British Virgin Is 9-0
.....*St Lucia 10-0 on agg*
Game 2
13.06.04 .....Panama-St Lucia 4-0
20.06.04 .....St Lucia-Panama 0-3
.....*Panama 7-0 on agg*

Group 5

June 12 - Havana
Cuba 2 (More pen 25, 75)
Costa Rica 2 (Sequeira 12, Saborio 42)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 18,500. **Ref:** Archundia (Mex)
Cuba: Molina - Marquez, Pedraza, Cruzata, Pereira (Hernandez 58), Aquino (Marten 60), Cervantes (Morales 70), More, Galindo, Colone, Adriano.
Costa Rica: Gonzalez - Marin, G Martinez, Sequeira, M Solis, Centeno, Bryce (A Solis 65), Gomez (Saborio 32), Chinchilla, Ledezma (Scott 79), C Castro.

June 20 - Alajuela
Costa Rica 1 (Gomez 31)
Cuba 1 (Cervantes 45)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** Prendergast (Jam)
Agg 3-3. Costa Rica on away goals
Costa Rica: R Gonzalez - Marin, G Martinez, M Solis, Centeno, Gomez, L Gonzalez (Chinchilla 46), Scott (Saborio 77), Bennette, Ledezma (Bryce 62), C Castro.
Cuba: Molina - Marquez, Pedraza, Cruzata, Aquino, Cervantes (Morales 65), More, Galindo, Colone, Hernandez (Pereira 50), Adriano (Ramirez 65).

Game 1
22.02.04 .....Cayman Islands-Cuba 1-2
27.03.04 .....Cuba-Cayman Islands 3-0
.....*Cuba 5-1 on agg*
Game 2
12.06.04 .....Cuba-Costa Rica 2-2
20.06.04 .....Costa Rica-Cuba 1-1
.....*Agg 3-3. Costa Rica on away goals*

Group 6

June 12 - Paramaribo
Surinam 1 (Purperhart 14)
Guatemala 1 (Ramirez 35)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 5,500. **Ref:** Jimenez (CR)
Surinam: Blokland - Baino, Amelo, Felter, Linger, Kinsaini, Uralime (Ives Vlijter 46), Sandvliet, Purperhart (Brandon 58), Panka, Lupson (Emanuelson 44).
Guatemala: Trigueno - Melgar, Chen, Flores, Thompson, Romero (Guevara 75), Acevedo, Ramirez (Figueroa 68), Martinez, Pezzarossi, Rodriguez.

June 20 - Guatemala City
Guatemala 3 (Ruiz 21, 85, Pezzarossi 80)
Surinam 1 (Brandon 82)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 19,610. **Ref:** Rodriguez (Mex)
Guatemala 4-2 on agg
Guatemala: Trigueno - Melgar, Chen, Cabrera, Thompson, Ramirez (Hurtarte 87), Martinez, Antonio, Pezzarossi, Rodriguez (Figueroa 67), Ruiz.
Surinam: Tempo - Baino, Amelo, Felter, Grootfaam, Kinsaini, Purperhart, Panka (Christoph 42), Lupson, Ives Vlijter (Brandon 77), Ceder (Sandvliet 54).

Game 1
28.02.04 .....Aruba-Surinam 1-2
27.03.04 .....Surinam-Aruba 8-1
.....*Surinam 10-2 on agg*
Game 2
12.06.04 .....Surinam-Guatemala 1-1
20.06.04 .....Guatemala-Surinam 3-1
.....*Guatemala 4-2 on agg*

Group 7

June 12 - Willemstad
Dutch Antilles 1 (Hose 75)
Honduras 2 (D Suazo 8, 68)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 12,000. **Ref:** McArthur (Guy)
Dutch Antilles: Pisas - Martha, Jones, Mongen (Cicilia 69), D Winklaar, Victoria, Rijaard, Roos (Cijntje 69), Hose, Franken, Siberie (Hernandez 78).
Honduras: H Medina - Figueroa, D Suazo, Leon (Marin 81), M Suazo, S Martinez (C Pavon 89), Guerrero, Guevara, Alvarez, Sabillon, Bernardez.

June 19 - San Pedro Sula
Honduras 4 (Guevara 7, D Suazo 22, Alvarez 49, C Pavon 70)
Dutch Antilles 0
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Alcala (Mex)
Honduras 6-1 on agg
Honduras: H Medina - Figueroa, D Suazo (C Pavon 63), Leon (E Martinez 72), M Suazo, S Martinez (Nunez 63), Guerrero, Guevara, Alvarez, Sabillon, Bernardez.
Dutch Antilles: Pisas - Martha, Jones (Kantelberg 48), Hernandez (Bernardus 69), Wau, Victoria, Rijaard, Roos, Siberie (Cijntje 40), Hose, Winklaar. *Sent off: Martha 34min.*

Game 1
18.02.04 .....Antigua & Barb-Dutch Antilles 2-0
31.03.04 .....Dutch Antilles-Antigua & Barb 3-0
.....*Dutch Antilles 3-2 on agg*
Game 2
12.06.04 .....Dutch Antilles-Honduras 1-2
19.06.04 .....Honduras-Dutch Antilles 4-0
.....*Honduras 6-1 on agg*

Group 8

June 13 - Kingston
Canada 4 (Peschisolido 39, Radzinski 55, McKenna 75, Brennan 83)
Belize 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 8,245. **Ref:** Batres (Gtm)
Canada: Onstad - Jazic, Watson, De Vos, De Guzman, Stalteri, Imhof, Radzinski, Peschisolido (McKenna 73), Hume (Brennan 65), De Rosario.
Belize: Moody - Smith, Symms, Mariano, Rowley, M Leslie, Muschamp, Serano (Hendricks 60), Flowers (O Lyons 60), Frazer (Morales 74), Alvarez.

*June 16 - Kingston**
Belize 0
Canada 4 (Radzinski 45, De Rosario 63, 73, Brennan 85)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 5,124. **Ref:** Gordon (T&T)
Canada 8-0 on agg
**Tie played in Canada*
Belize: Moody - Smith, Symms, Mariano, M Leslie, Muschamp, Roches, Hendricks (Frazer 81), O Lyons (R Leslie 55), Morales (Dorado 72), Alvarez. *Sent off: Mariano 60min.*
Canada: Onstad - McKenna, De Vos, Imhof (Hume 46), Radzinski (Peschisolido 46), Brennan, Bernier, Bircham, Hutchinson, Klukowski, De Rosario. *Sent off: Hume 84min.*

13.06.04 .....Canada-Belize 4-0
16.06.04 .....Belize-Canada 0-4
.....*Canada 8-0 on agg*

Group 9

June 19 - San Antonio, USA
Dominica 0
Mexico 10 (Bautista 9, 38, Borgetti 11, 36, Marquez 16, Osomo 49, 87, Lozano 74, D Davino 77, Palencia 90)
HT: 0-5. **Att:** 36,451. **Ref:** Callender (Bar)
Dominica: Angol - Dangler, Francies, Victor (Williams 31), Frederick (Etienne 57), Marshall, Cuffy, Dyer (Smith 46), Joseph, Casimir, Peters.
Mexico: O Sanchez - Altamirano (Arellano 62), Marquez, D Davino, Osorio, Valdez, Torrado (Lozano 61), Pardo, Palencia, Borgetti (Osorno 46), Bautista.

June 27 - Aguascaliente
Mexico 8 (Lozano 1, 17, 60, Borgetti 33, 38, Bautista 36, Oteo 58, Altamirano 76)
Dominica 0
HT: 5-0. **Att:** 17,000. **Ref:** Stott (USA)
Mexico 18-0 on agg
Mexico: O Perez - Altamirano, Marquez (Oteo 46), D Davino, Osorio, Lozano (Palencia 71), Torrado (R Morales 65), Pardo, Borgetti, Osorno, Bautista.
Dominica: Angol - Francies, Pierre-Louis, Etienne, Toussaint (Williams 60), Marshall, Cuffy, George, Joseph, Casimir (Peters 76), Dangler.

Game 1
26.03.04 .....Dominica-Bahamas 1-1
28.03.04 .....Bahamas-Dominica 1-3
.....*Dominica 4-2 on agg*
Game 2
19.06.04 .....Dominica-Mexico 0-10
27.06.04 .....Mexico-Dominica 8-0
.....*Mexico 18-0 on agg*

Group 10

June 13 - Bridgetown
Barbados 0
St Kitts & Nevis 2 (Gumbs 78, Newton 88)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 3,500. **Ref:** Alfaro (ElS)
Barbados: Chase - R Burrowes, James, Ifill, Lucas (Riley 65; Skinner 83), Goodridge (Lovell 65), K Hall, Sobers, Parris, Grosvenor, N Forde.
St Kitts & Nevis: Byron - Eddy, Lewis, Leader, Newton, G Isaac, Willock (Lake 73), Gumbs, Huggins (Hodge 75), Burton, Gomez (T Riley 87).

June 19 - Basseterre
St Kitts & Nevis 3 (Gomez 16, Willock 22, 29)
Barbados 2 (Skinner 33, Goodridge 45)
HT: 3-2. **Att:** 3,500. **Ref:** Pineda (Hnd)
St Kitts & Nevis 5-2 on agg

St Kitts & Nevis: Byron - Eddy, Lewis, Leader, Newton, G Isaac (T Riley 83), Willock (Lake 67), Gumbs, Huggins, Burton, Gomez (Hodge 61).
Barbados: Chase - James, Cox, Ifill, Ryan (M Forde 60), Goodridge, K Hall, Parris, Lovell (Hawkesworth 54), Brathwaite, Skinner (Grosvenor 73).

Game 1
18.02.04 .....US Virgin Is-St Kitts & Nevis.....0-4
31.03.04 .....St Kitts & Nevis-US Virgin Is.....7-0
.....*St Kitts & Nevis 11-0 on agg*
Game 2
13.06.04 .....Barbados-St Kitts & Nevis.....0-2
19.06.04 .....St Kitts & Nevis-Barbados.....3-2
.....*St Kitts & Nevis 5-2 on agg*

Group 11

June 13 - Santo Domingo
Dominican Republic 0
Trinidad & Tobago 2 (M Andrews 62, S John 90)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Moreno (Pan)
Dominican Republic: Mejia - Vasquez, Medina, Taveras, Severino, Espinal, Sanchez (Reyes 68), Contrera, Arias (M Perez 60), W Tejada, Alvarez.
Trinidad & Tobago: Ince - Fitzwilliams, M Andrews, Sancho (Rojas 72), Edwards (Theobald 54), Eve, Jemmot, Rougier, S John, K Thomas (Baptiste 85), Lawrence.

June 20 - Marabella
Trinidad & Tobago 4 (Scotland 49, S John 71, Theobald 73, Sealy 85)
Dominican Republic 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 5,500. **Ref:** Pinas (Sur)
Trinidad & Tobago 6-0 on agg
Trinidad & Tobago: Ince - Rojas, M Andrews, Rahim (Sealy 78), Eve, Scotland (Glenn 66), Theobald, Rougier, S John (Baptiste 88), Lawrence, Jones.
Dominican Republic: Mejia - Vasquez, Medina, Taveras, Severino, Espinal, Zapata (Sanchez 23), Contrera, Perez, W Tejada (Arias 62), Alvarez (F Reyes 88).

Game 1
19.03.04 .....Dominican Republic-Anguilla.....0-0
21.03.04 .....Anguilla-Dominican Republic.....0-6
.....*Dominican Rep 6-0 on agg*
Game 2
13.06.04 .....Dominican Rep-Trinidad & Tob ...0-2
20.06.04 .....Trinidad & Tob-Dominican Rep ...4-0
.....*Trinidad & Tobago 6-0 on agg*

Group 12

June 13 - Diriamba
Nicaragua 2 (Palacios 37, Calero 77)
St Vincent & The Grenadines 2 (Haynes 9, S Samuel 43)
HT: 1-2. **Att:** 7,500. **Ref:** Delgado (Cub)
Nicaragua: Chamorro - Quintanilla, Ruiz, Alonso, T Acevedo (Novoa 58), Franklin Lopez (Martinez 71), Calero, Palacios, Rocha (M Acevedo 58), Rodriguez, D Solorzano.
St Vincent & The Grenadines: Andrews - B Samuel (V John 67), M Forde, W John, Hendrickson, M Charles, Gonsalves (Ballantyne 69), Prince, S Samuel, Haynes (Guy 54), Joseph.

June 20 - Kingstown
St Vincent & The Grenadines 4 (S Samuel 14, 79, James 15, og 86)
Nicaragua 1 (Palacios 60)
HT: 2-0. **Att:** 5,000. **Ref:** Brohim (Dom)
St Vincent & The Grenadines 6-3 on agg
St Vincent & The Grenadines: Andrews - C Huggins, M Forde, W John, Hendrickson, M Charles, Ballantyne (Gonsalves 90), Prince, S Samuel (Haynes 83), James (Guy 75), Velox.
Nicaragua: Chamorro - Quintanilla (Novoa 46), Ruiz, Alonso, Calero, Palacios, Rocha (Martinez 46), M Acevedo, Rodriguez (Sanchez 83), D Solorzano, Francisco Lopez.

13.06.04 .....Nicaragua-St Vincent & G'dines..2-2
20.06.04 .....St Vincent & G'dines-Nicaragua..4-1
.....*St Vincent & G'dines 6-3 on agg*

Game 2/group winners advance to 2nd stage

2nd stage

Group 1

United States, El Salvador, Jamaica, Panama

Group 2

Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Canada

Group 3

Mexico, St Kitts & Nevis, Trinidad & Tobago, St Vincent & The Grenadines

Top two from each group advance to 3rd stage

3rd stage

The six qualifiers play in a single group, the top three from which qualify for finals. The fourth-placed team meet the winners of the Asian play-off in a play-off for a place in finals

EUROPE

14 finals berths (including hosts Germany, who qualify automatically)

OCEANIA

0.5 finals berths

2nd stage

Staged in Adelaide, Australia

May 29
Vanuatu 0
Solomon Islands 1 (B Suri pen 51)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 200. **Ref:** Shield (Aus)
Vanuatu: D Chilia - Gete, Bibi, Lauru (Vava 70), Iautu, S Chilia, Mermer, Poida (Maleb 75), Iwai, P Maki (Qorig 46), D Alick.
Solomon Islands: Aefi - Houkarawa (Leo 89), Kilifa, Maemae (Toata 83), B Suri, Menapi, Waita (Samani 69), G Omokirio, Faarodo, Kakai, G Suri.

May 29
Tahiti 0
Fiji 0
Att: 3,000. **Ref:** Farina (Ita)
Tahiti: Tapeta - Tchen (Kautai 75), Kugogne, Li Waut, Garcia, Mataitai, Temataua, Neuffer (Labaste 65), Teuira, Simon, Tagawa (Wajoka 84).
Fiji: Tamanisau - Dau, Baleinuku, Kainihewe, Vulivuli (Sabutu 86), Veresa Toma, Masinisau, Waqa, Kumar (Gataurua 76), Viliame Toma, Rokotakala.

May 29
Australia 1 (Bresciano 40)
New Zealand 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 12,100. **Ref:** Larsen (Den)
Australia: Kalac - Laybutt (Madaschi 72), Colosimo (North 53), T Vidmar, Emerton, Skoko, Aloisi, Lazaridis, Grella, Vieri (Sterjovski 67), Bresciano.
New Zealand: Paston - Mulligan, Old, Bunce, Lochhead, Vicelich, Hickey (Fisher 50), Bertos (Smeltz 69), Elliott, Coveny, De Gregorio (Oughton 77).

May 31
New Zealand 3 (Fisher 36, Oughton 81, Lines 90)
Solomon Islands 0
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 217. **Ref:** Iturralde Gonzalez (Spa)
New Zealand: Paston - Mulligan, Old, Bunce, Lochhead, Vicelich, Lines, Brown (Oughton 80), Elliott (Wilson 85), Fisher, Coveny (Bertos 73).
Solomon Islands: Aefi - Houkarawa, Kilifa, Maemae, B Suri, Menapi, Waita (Samani 66), G Omokirio, Faarodo, Kakai, G Suri.

May 31
Australia 9 (Cahill 14, 47, Skoko 43, Simon og 44, Sterjovski 51, 61, 74, Zdrilic 85, Chipperfield 89)
Tahiti 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 1,200. **Ref:** Attison (Van)
Australia: Kalac - North, T Vidmar, Chipperfield, Skoko (Kisnorbo 46), Aloisi (Sterjovski 46), Cahill, Lazaridis (Elrich 46), Grella, Zdrilic, Madaschi.
Tahiti: Tapeta - Tchen, Kugogne, Li Waut (Pitoeff 80), Garcia, Mataitai, Temataua, Teuira, Simon (Marmouyet 61), Tagawa, Labaste (Neuffer 58).

May 31
Fiji 1 (Veresa Toma 73)
Vanuatu 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 500. **Ref:** Ariiotima (Tah)
Fiji: Tuba - Dau, Kainihewe, Vulivuli, Veresa Toma, Masinisau (Baleinuku 81), Waqa, Kumar, Viliame Toma (Vidovi 46), Rokotakala, Gataurua.
Vanuatu: D Chilia - Gete (Qorig 82), Bibi, Demas, Vava, S Chilia, Mermer, Poida (Joe 86), Thomsen, Iwai (Maleb 46), D Alick.

June 2
Australia 6 (Madaschi 6, 50, Cahill 39, 66, 75, Elrich 89)
Fiji 1 (Gataurua 19)
HT: 2-1. **Att:** 2,200. **Ref:** Iturralde Gonzalez (Spa)
Australia: Kalac - North, T Vidmar, Chipperfield (Brosque 46), Emerton (Elrich 46), Cahill, Grella, Kisnorbo, Sterjovski, Vieri (Zdrilic 59), Madaschi.
Fiji: Tuba (Tamanisau 43) - Dau, Baleinuku, Vesikula, Kainihewe (Avinesh 82), Vulivuli, Vidovi (Erenio 56), Waqa, Kumar, Gataurua, Sabutu. *Sent off: Gataurua 58min.*

June 2
Tahiti 0
Solomon Islands 4 (Faarodo 9, Menapi 14, 80, B Suri 42)
HT: 0-3. **Att:** 50. **Ref:** Rakaroi (Fij)
Tahiti: Tien Wah - Tchen, Kautai, Li Waut, Garcia, Wajoka (Mataitai 46), Neuffer (Tagawa 46), Teuira, Simon, Labaste (Temataua 63), Pitoeff.
Solomon Islands: Ray - Leo, Houkarawa, Kilifa, Maemae, B Suri (Samani 89), Menapi, Waita, G Omokirio, Faarodo, Kakai.

June 2
New Zealand 2 (Coveny 61, 75)
Vanuatu 4 (S Chilia 37, Bibi 64, Maleb 72, Qorig 88)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 356. **Ref:** Farina (Ita)
New Zealand: Paston - Oughton, Bunce, Lochhead, Vichelich, Lines (Smeltz 56), Bertos (De Gregorio 72), Fisher, Nelsen, Wilson (Coveny 52), Puna.
Vanuatu: D Chilia - Gete (Joe 81), Bibi, Demas, Vava, S Chilia, Poida (Tabe 84), Thomsen, Qorig, Maleb, Manses.

June 4
New Zealand 10 (Coveny 6, 38, 45, Fisher 16, 22, 63, Jones 72, Oughton 74, Nelsen 82, 87)
Tahiti 0
HT: 5-0. **Att:** 200. **Ref:** Shield (Aus)
New Zealand: Paston - Oughton, Old, Bunce (Elliott 46), Lochhead, Lines (Bertos 35), Fisher, Nelsen, Wilson, Coveny (Jones 65), De Gregorio.
Tahiti: Samin - Tchen, Kugogne, Garcia (Neuffer 46), Temataua, Teuira, Simon, Moretta (Kautai 79), Marmouyet, Tagawa, Pitoeff (Li Waut 69).

June 4
Fiji 1 (Veresa Toma 21)
Solomon Islands 2 (Kakai 16, Houkarawa 82)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Attison (Van)
Fiji: Tuba - Dau, Baleinuku, Kainihewe (Vesikula 83), Vulivuli, Veresa Toma (Sabutu 87), Masinisau, Waqa, Kumar, Viliame Toma, Rokotakala (Erenio 85).
Solomon Islands: Ray - Leo, Houkarawa, Kilifa, Maemae, B Suri, Menapi, Waita (Samani 51), Faarodo, Kakai, G Suri.

June 4
Vanuatu 0
Australia 3 (Aloisi 25, 85, Emerton 81)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 4,000. **Ref:** Ariiotima (Tah)
Vanuatu: D Chilia - Bibi, Demas, Vava, S Chilia, Poida (P Maki 43), Thomsen, Qorig (Mermer 74), Maleb (Iwai 61), Joe, Manses.
Australia: Kalac - North, T Vidmar, Emerton, Skoko, Aloisi, Lazaridis, Brosque (Elrich 64), Grella, Tarka, Zdrilic (Sterjovski 64).

June 6
Tahiti 2 (Temataua 40, Wajoka 89)
Vanuatu 1 (Iwai 23)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 300. **Ref:** Rakaroi (Fij)
Tahiti: Tapeta - Tchen, Kugogne, Garcia, Mataitai, Wajoka, Temataua, Teuira, Simon, Marmouyet, Tagawa.
Vanuatu: Kalsanei - Tabe (Gete 67), Bibi, Demas, Vava, S Chilia (Maleb 63), Mermer, Thomsen (Iautu 77), Iwai, P Maki, Joe.

June 6
Fiji 0
New Zealand 2 (Bunce 8, Coveny 56)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 300. **Ref:** Larsen (Den)
Fiji: Tamanisau - Dau, Vesikula, Kainihewe (Vidovi 33), Vulivuli (Rokotakala 81), Masinisau (Sabutu 51), Waqa, Kumar, Viliame Toma, Gataurua, Erenio.
New Zealand: Paston - Oughton, Old, Bunce, Lochhead, Vichelich, Lines, Fisher (Jones 81), Nelsen, Coveny, De Gregorio (Bertos 60).

June 6
Solomon Islands 2 (Menapi 43, 75)
Australia 2 (Cahill 50, Emerton 52)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 1,500. **Ref:** Iturralde Gonzalez (Spa)
Solomon Islands: Ray - Leo, Houkarawa, Kilifa, Maemae, B Suri, Menapi, Samani (Lui 63), Faarodo, Kakai (Waita 63), G Suri.
Australia: Kalac - North, Emerton, Skoko, Aloisi, Cahill, Brosque (Colosimo 46), Kisnorbo, Tarka (Sterjovski 46), Vieri (Elrich 46), Madaschi.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Australia	5	4	1	0	21	3	13
Solomon Is	5	3	1	1	9	6	10
New Zealand	5	3	0	2	17	5	9
Fiji	5	1	1	3	3	10	4
Tahiti	5	1	1	3	2	24	4
Vanuatu	5	1	0	4	5	9	3

Top two advanced to third stage

3rd stage

Australia and Solomon Islands meet in a two-leg play-off in September 2005, the winners of which meet the fifth-placed South American team in a play-off for a place in finals

SOUTH AMERICA

4.5 finals berths

Teams play each other twice

June 1 - La Paz
Bolivia 2 (Cristaldo 9, Roger Suarez 72)
Paraguay 1 (Cardozo 33)
HT: 1-1. **Att:** 23,013. **Ref:** Rezende (Bra)
Bolivia: L Fernandez - Jauregui, Raldes, J M Pena, Gatty Ribeiro (Soliz 90), Cristaldo, O Sanchez, Alvarez (Roger Suarez 60), Baldivieso, L Gutierrez (Angulo 86), Botero. *Sent off: J M Pena 69min.*
Paraguay: Villar - Espinola, Lugo (Cabanas 82), Gamarra, Da Silva, E Gonzalez, A Ortiz, Duarte (De los Santos 71), Enciso, Cardozo, Santa Cruz (Ramirez 71).

June 1 - Montevideo
Uruguay 1 (Forlan 71)
Peru 3 (Solano 13, Pizarro 19, Farfan 61)
HT: 0-2. **Att:** 30,000. **Ref:** Selman (Chl)
Uruguay: Munua - Sorondo, Lembo, De Souza, Guigou (A Romero 46), Sosa, Garcia, Nunez, Pacheco (Forlan 46), Chevanton, Pandiani (D Silva 62). *Sent off: Sorondo 32min.*
Peru: Ibanez - Galliquio, Acasiete, Rebosio (J Garcia 80), Vilches, Jayo, C Zegarra, Solano, Palacios (Jorge Soto 58), Farfan, Pizarro (Mendoza 46).

June 1 - San Cristobal
Venezuela 0
Chile 1 (Pinilla 84)
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 23,040. **Ref:** Torres (Par)
Venezuela: Angelucci - Vallenilla (H Gonzalez 65), Cichero, Rey, Hernandez, Jimenez, Vielma (A Gonzalez 75), Urdaneta (Margiotta 46), Paez, Arango, Rondon.
Chile: N Tapia - R Rojas, J Vargas, Olarra, R Perez, Maldonado, Melendez, Mark Gonzalez (Mirosevic 59), Pizarro (Valenzuela 79), Galaz (Pinilla 46), Navia.

June 2 - Belo Horizonte
Brazil 3 (Ronaldo pen 16, pen 67, pen 90)
Argentina 1 (Sorin 79)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 50,000. **Ref:** Ruiz (Col)
Brazil: Dida - Cafu, Juan, Roque Junior, Roberto Carlos, Edmilson, Juninho Pernambucano (Alex 74), Ze Roberto, Kaka (Julio Baptista 74), Luis Fabiano (Edu 90), Ronaldo.
Argentina: Cavallero - Quiroga, Samuel, Heinze, Zanetti, Mascherano, Sorin, L Gonzalez (Almar 60), C Delgado (Rosales 36; Saviola 61), Crespo, Kily Gonzalez.

June 2 - Quito
Ecuador 2 (Delgado 3, Salas 66)
Colombia 1 (Oviedo 56)
HT: 1-0. **Att:** 31,484. **Ref:** Baldassi (Arg)
Ecuador: J Espinoza - De la Cruz, I Hurtado, G Espinoza, Ambrossi, M Ayovi (Lastra 87), E Tenorio, Mendez (A Aguinaga 65), Chala, Figueroa (Salas 50), Delgado.
Colombia: Calero - Perea, Yepes, I Cordoba, Bedoya (Ferreira 78), Vargas, J C Ramirez, Viafara (Viveros 46), Oviedo, Valentierra (Murillo 70), Rey. *Sent off: Murillo 87min.*

June 5 - Quito
Ecuador 3 (Soliz og 29, Delgado 33, De la Cruz 40)
Bolivia 2 (L Gutierrez 58, J A Castillo 75)
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 30,020. **Ref:** Brand (Ven)
Ecuador: J Espinoza - De la Cruz, I Hurtado, G Espinoza, Reasco, E Tenorio, Obregon (A Aguinaga 70), Ambrossi (M Ayovi 80), Chala (Mendez 66), Delgado, Salas.
Bolivia: L Fernandez - Soliz (Gatty Ribeiro 46), Alvarez, O Sanchez, Angulo (Galindo 46), Baldivieso, Roger Suarez (J A Castillo 66), Jauregui, Raldes, L Gutierrez, Botero.

June 6 - Buenos Aires
Argentina 0
Paraguay 0
Att: 43,000. **Ref:** Simon (Bra)
Argentina: Abbondanzieri - Ayala, Samuel, Heinze, L Gonzalez (Rosales 66), Mascherano, Sorin, Kily Gonzalez, Tevez, Crespo, Saviola.
Paraguay: Villar - Caniza, Gamarra, J C Caceres, Da Silva, Gavilan (Sarabia 90), Enciso, A Ortiz, Toledo (E Gonzalez 65), Santa Cruz, Cardozo (Ramirez 83). *Sent off: A Ortiz 60min.*

June 6 - Santiago
Chile 1 (Navia pen 89)
Brazil 1 (Luis Fabiano 15)
HT: 0-1. **Att:** 62,503. **Ref:** Elizondo (Arg)
Chile: N Tapia - R Rojas (Alvarez 46), L Fuentes, Olarra, R Perez, Martel (Galaz 46), Melendez, Maldonado, Mark Gonzalez (Mirosevic 56), Pizarro, Navia.
Brazil: Dida - Cafu, Juan, Roque Junior, Roberto Carlos, Edmilson (Gilberto Silva 80), Juninho Pernambucano (Alex 85), Kaka (Julio Baptista 72), Edu, Ronaldo, Luis Fabiano.

June 6 - Barranquilla
Colombia 5 (Pacheco 17, 31, Moreno 20, J Restrepo 80, Herrera 86)
Uruguay 0
HT: 3-0. **Att:** 7,000. **Ref:** Amarilla (Par)
Colombia: Calero - Palacio, Perea, Yepes, Bedoya, J Restrepo, J C Ramirez, Pacheco (Ferreira 84), Oviedo (Vargas 73), Moreno (Arriaga 73), Herrera.
Uruguay: Munua - Gonzalez, Lembo, De Souza (Lago 62), A Romero (De los Santos 46), M Romero, P Garcia, Delgado, Canobbio (Forlan 46), Chevanton, Recoba.

June 6 - Lima
Peru 0
Venezuela 0
Att: 45,000. **Ref:** Larrionda (Uru)
Peru: Ibanez - Jorge Soto, Acasiete, Rebosio, Hidalgo (Vilches 66), Jayo, C Zegarra, Solano, Palacios (Orejuela 66), Farfan, Mendoza (Silva 79).
Venezuela: Angelucci - Vallenilla, Rey, Cichero, M Mea Vitali, Paez (H Gonzalez 65), Jimenez, Hernandez, Urdaneta (Margiotta 79), Rondon (Moran 59), Arango.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brazil	7	3	4	0	11	7	13
Argentina	7	3	3	1	11	6	12
Chile	7	3	2	2	9	7	11
Paraguay	7	3	2	2	9	8	11
Ecuador	7	3	1	3	8	7	10
Venezuela	7	3	1	3	6	7	10
Peru	7	2	3	2	9	7	9
Colombia	7	2	1	4	10	10	7
Uruguay	7	2	1	4	12	19	7
Bolivia	7	2	0	5	9	16	6

Top four in section qualify for finals; fifth-placed side enter a play-off against Oceania section winners for a place in finals

EUROPE

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

1st qual rnd draw

Flora Tallinn (Est) v Gorica (Sln) (match 3)
FC Gomel (Bls) v SK Tirana (Alb) (10)
HJK Helsinki (Fin) v Linfield (NI) (4)
KR Reykjavik (Ice) v Shelbourne (Ire) (1)
Pobeda (Mac) v Pyunik Yerevan (Arm) (5)
Serif Tiraspol (Mol) v Jeunesse d'Esch (Lux) (6)
Siroki Brijeg (Bos) v Neftchi (Aze) (9)
Skonto Riga (Lat) v Rhyl (Wal) (2)
Sliema Wanderers (Mlt) v FBK Kaunas (Lit) (8)
WIT Georgia (Geo) v HB Torshavn (Far) (7)
1st legs, July 13/14; 2nd legs, July 21

2nd qual rnd draw

APOEL (Cyp) v Sparta Prague (Cze)
Club Brugge (Blg) v Lokomotiv Plovdiv (Bul)
Djurgardens (Swe) v Winners match 8
Hajduk Split (Cro) v Winners match 1
MSK Zilina (Slk) v Dinamo Bucharest (Rom)
Rosenborg (Nor) v Winners match 6
Winners match 2 v Trabzonspor (Tur)
Winners match 3 v FC Copenhagen (Den)
Winners match 4 v Maccabi Tel Aviv (Isr)
Winners match 5 v Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukr)
Winners match 7 v Wisla Krakow (Pol)
Winners match 9 v CSKA Moscow (Rus)
Winners match 10 v Ferencvaros (Hun)
Young Boys (Swi) v Red Star Belgrade (Ser)

INTERTOTO CUP

1st rnd

1st legs, June 19/20; 2nd legs, June 26/27

Aberystwyth (Wal) v Dinaburg (Lat) 0-0, 0-4 (agg 0-4)
Bregenz (Aut) v Hazar Univ (Aze) 0-3*, 1-2 (agg 1-5)
Cork (Ire) v Malmo (Swe) 3-1, 1-0 (agg 4-1)
Esbjerg (Den) v NSI (Far) 3-1, 4-0 (agg 7-1)
Ethnikos Achnas (Cyp) v Vardar (Mac) 1-5, 1-5 (agg 2-10)
Gent (Blg) v Fylkir (Ice) 2-1, 1-0 (agg 3-1)
Grevenmacher (Lux) v Tampere (Fin) 1-1, 0-0 (agg 1-1; Tampere on away goals)
Hibernians (Mlt) v Slaven (Cro) 2-1, 0-3 (agg 2-4)
Marek (Bul) v Dila Gori (Geo) 0-0, 2-0 (agg 2-0)
Matav (Hun) v Teplice (Cze) 1-0, 1-3 (agg 2-3)
Moscow Spartak (Rus) v Atlantas (Lit) 2-0, 0-1 (agg 2-1)
MyPa (Fin) v Zlin (Cze) 1-1, 2-3 (agg 3-4)
OB (Den) v Ballymena (NI) 0-0, 7-0 (agg 7-0)
Odra (Pol) v Dinamo Minsk (Bls) 1-0, 0-2 (agg 1-2)
Publikum (Sln) v Sloboda (Bos) 2-1, 0-1 (agg 2-2; Sloboda on away goals)
Sant Julia (And) v Sartid (Ser) 0-8, 0-3 (agg 0-11)
Sparta Trnava (Slk) v Debrecen (Hun) 3-0, 1-4 (agg 4-4; Spartak Trnava on away goals)
Teuta (Alb) v Dubnica (Slk) 0-0, 0-4 (agg 0-4)
Thun (Swi) v Gloria (Rom) 2-0, 0-0 (agg 2-0)
Vetra (Lit) v Trans Narva (Est) 3-0, 1-0 (agg 4-0)
Vllaznia (Alb) v Hapoel Be'er Sheva (Isr) 1-2, 1-0 (agg 2-2; Hapoel on away goals)

**Game actually finished 4-0 to Bregenz but was awarded 3-0 to Hazar after Bregenz named three ineligible players in their squad*

MOLDOVA

MOLDOVA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Serif	28	20	5	3	50	16	65
Nistru	28	17	6	5	47	26	57
Zimbru	28	14	7	7	40	23	49
FC Tiraspol	28	12	9	7	32	22	45
Dacia	28	9	8	11	26	28	35
Tiligul	28	5	14	9	21	26	29
Unisport-Auto	28	6	5	17	29	52	23
FC Agro	28	1	2	25	14	66	5

NORWAY

June 6: Brann 1 Tromso 0; Fredrikstad 2 Lyn 4; Molde 1 Sogndal 1; Rosenborg 5 Ham-Kam 0; Valerenga 1 Odd Grenland 0; Viking 1 Bodo/Glimt 1.
June 7: Lillestrom 3 Stabaek 0.
June 9: Rosenborg 3 Bodo/Glimt 0.
June 13: Bodo/Glimt 0 Lillestrom 4; Brann 4 Fredrikstad 2; Ham-Kam 5 Molde 1; Lyn 2 Viking 0; Sogndal 2 Valerenga 1; Tromso 2 Odd Grenland 0.
June 14: Stabaek 1 Rosenborg 1.
June 20: Lillestrom 1 Lyn 1; Molde 3 Stabaek 0; Odd Grenland 4 Sogndal 4; Tromso 3 Fredrikstad 2; Valerenga 2 Ham-Kam 0.
June 21: Viking 4 Brann 2.
June 27: Bodo/Glimt 0 Molde 0; Brann 1 Lillestrom 5; Fredrikstad 0 Viking 0; Ham-Kam 2 Odd Grenland 4; Sogndal 2 Tromso 1; Stabaek 2 Valerenga 0.
June 28: Lyn 0 Rosenborg 2.
July 4: Bodo/Glimt 1 Valerenga 2; Fredrikstad 1 Lillestrom 4; Ham-Kam 3 Sogndal 2; Lyn 1 Molde 2; Stabaek 0 Odd Grenland 0; Viking 1 Tromso 2.
July 5: Brann 3 Rosenborg 4.

NORWAY

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Tromso	14	9	1	4	26	14	28
Rosenborg	14	7	5	2	28	17	26
Lillestrom	14	6	5	3	28	14	23
Valerenga	14	6	5	3	15	13	23
Ham-Kam	14	6	4	4	20	21	22
Odd Grenland	14	5	6	3	24	19	21
Lyn	14	5	4	5	16	14	19
Brann	14	6	1	7	24	25	19
Molde	14	4	6	4	17	18	18
Viking	14	3	7	4	13	16	16
Stabaek	14	4	3	7	13	21	15
Sogndal	14	3	5	6	23	28	14
Bodo/Glimt	14	3	3	8	12	25	12
Fredrikstad	14	2	3	9	20	34	9

POLAND

June 8: Amica 2 Odra 1; Legia 6 Widzew 0; Wisla K 4 Polonia 1; Gornik P 0 Lech 2; Gornik Z 0 Gornik L 1; Wisla P 1 Katowice 1; Groclin 3 Swit 1.
June 11: Gornik L 1 Amica 0; Polonia 2 Gornik Z 0; Katowice 2 Legia 4; Lech 2 Wisla K 2; Widzew 0 Groclin 1; Swit 0 Gornik P 0.

POLAND – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Wisla K	26	21	2	3	73	30	65
Legia	26	18	6	2	56	19	60
Amica	26	14	6	6	47	25	48
Groclin	26	13	7	6	59	31	46
Wisla P	26	10	8	8	41	39	38
Lech	26	10	7	9	43	34	37
Gornik Z	26	8	9	9	26	33	33
Gornik L	26	10	3	13	22	38	33
Odra	26	8	4	14	27	40	28
Katowice	26	6	8	12	20	42	26
Polonia	26	6	7	13	25	40	25
Gornik P	26	6	5	15	17	37	23
Swit	26	5	7	14	21	42	22
Widzew	26	4	7	15	25	52	19

ROMANIA

ROMANIAN CUP – Final

June 6 - National stadium, Bucharest
Dinamo 2 (V Munteanu 66, Niculescu 77)
Otelul 0
HT: 0-0. **Att:** 10,000. **Ref:** Balaj

RUSSIA

July 3: CSKA 3 Torpedo Moscow 3; Kryliya Sovetov 4 Alaniya 2; Rostov 2 Zenit 1; Saturn 1 Amkar 1; Kuban 0 Dinamo 0; Rotor 0 Rubin 1.

RUSSIA

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Torpedo Moscow	14	9	4	1	29	12	31
Zenit	14	8	3	3	26	18	27
CSKA	14	6	7	1	23	13	25
Kryliya Sovetov	14	7	4	3	25	23	25
Lokomotiv	13	6	4	3	16	9	22
Alaniya	14	5	4	5	14	16	19
Saturn	14	3	8	3	16	13	17
Rubin	14	3	7	4	15	14	16
Dinamo	14	3	7	4	14	13	16
Rostov	14	4	4	6	16	22	16
Amkar	14	3	7	4	11	17	16
FC Moscow*	13	3	5	5	15	17	14
Spartak	13	4	2	7	21	25	14
Shinnik	13	3	5	5	7	12	14
Kuban	14	2	6	6	12	19	12
Rotor	14	1	3	10	14	31	6

**Formerly Torpedo-Metallurg*

SLOVAKIA

SLOVAKIA – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
MSK Zilina	36	17	13	6	62	35	64
Banska Bystrica	36	17	13	6	58	36	64
Ruzomberok	36	15	10	11	53	47	55
Spartak Trnava	36	15	8	13	46	46	53
Trencin	36	13	9	14	37	43	48
Dubnica	36	12	10	14	41	42	46
Inter Bratislava	36	12	9	15	38	44	45
A Petrzalka	36	10	14	12	43	44	44
Matador Puchov	36	10	9	17	34	54	39
Slovan Bratislava	36	6	11	19	37	58	29

SWEDEN

June 30: Malmo 1 Orgryte 0.

SWEDEN

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Halmstads	9	7	1	1	22	9	22
Hammarby	10	6	2	2	10	6	20
Malmo	10	5	4	1	16	5	19
Kalmar	9	5	2	2	13	8	17
IFK Gothenburg	9	4	2	3	9	6	14
Sundsvall	10	3	4	3	10	10	13
Djurgardens	9	3	3	3	12	13	12
Orgryte	10	2	4	4	9	13	10
Orebro	9	3	1	5	12	21	10
Trelleborgs	9	2	3	4	7	10	9
AIK	9	2	3	4	5	9	9
Landskrona	9	2	2	5	10	14	8
Helsingborgs	9	1	4	4	13	15	7
Elfsborg	9	1	3	5	6	15	6

UKRAINE

June 10: Shakhtar 1 Borysfen 0; Metalurh Z 2 Karpaty 0; Dnipro 1 Zirka 0; Kryvbas 1 Obolon 0; Arsenal 1 Dynamo 6; Chornomorets 2 Illichivets 1; Volyn 1 Metalurh D 3; Tavriya 3 Vorskla 1.
June 14: Illichivets 2 Volyn 0; Karpaty 0 Dnipro 0; Vorskla 0 Shakhtar 3; Dynamo 4 Chornomorets 2; Zirka 0 Kryvbas 1; Metalurh D 1 Tavriya 1; Borysfen 1 Metalurh Z 0.
June 15: Obolon 3 Arsenal 1.
June 19: Shakhtar 5 Metalurh Z 0; Dnipro 0 Borysfen 1; Kryvbas 0 Karpaty 2; Arsenal 3 Zirka 1; Chornomorets 0 Obolon 2; Volyn 0 Dynamo 2; Tavriya 1 Illichivets 0; Vorskla 1 Metalurh D 3.

UKRAINE – FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dynamo	30	23	4	3	68	20	73
Shakhtar	30	22	4	4	62	19	70
Dnipro	30	16	9	5	44	23	57
Metalurh D	30	14	10	6	51	34	52
Chornomorets	30	11	12	7	38	33	45
Obolon	30	11	8	11	34	35	41
Borysfen	30	11	8	11	25	29	41
Illichivets	30	10	10	10	34	36	40
Arsenal	30	10	7	13	38	44	37
Kryvbas	30	10	6	14	26	41	36
Metalurh Z	30	8	8	14	26	40	32
Tavriya	30	7	11	12	22	28	32
Volyn	30	7	8	15	25	44	29
Vorskla	30	6	9	15	26	49	27
Karpaty	30	6	8	16	22	39	26
Zirka*	30	3	8	19	16	43	14

**3pts deducted for non-payment of wages*

SOUTH AMERICA

LIBERTADORES CUP

Semi-finals, 1st legs

June 9 - Sao Paulo
Sao Paulo (Bra) 0
Once Caldas (Col) 0
Ref: Amarilla (Par)
Sao Paulo: Rogerio - Cicinho, Fabao, Rodrigo, Alexandre, Grafite (Ailton 74), Fabio Simplicio, Luis Fabiano, Nery, Danilo (Gabriel 62), Souza (Tardelli 46).
Once Caldas: Henao - Rojas, Viafara, Velasquez, Valentierra (Marin 67), Catano, Arango, Alcazar (Diaz 90), Soto (Ortegon 75), Garcia, Vanegas.

June 10 - Buenos Aires
Boca Juniors (Arg) 1 (Schiavi 28)
River Plate (Arg) 0
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Martin (Arg)
Boca: Abbondanzieri - Schiavi, Rodriguez, Calvo, Cascini, Burdisso, Barros Schelotto, Villarreal, Barijho, Caneo (Tevez 46), Vargas. *Sent off: Cascini 32min.*
River: Lux - Ameli, Rojas, Garce, Husain, Tuzzio, Mascherano (Sambueza 72), Gonzalez (Fernandez 48), Cavenaghi (Coudet 59), Gallardo, Lopez. *Sent off: Gallardo 32min, Garce 43min.*

Semi-finals, 2nd legs

June 16 - Manizales
Once Caldas 2 (Alcazar 27, Agudelo 90)
Sao Paulo 1 (Danilo 32)
HT: 1-1. **Ref:** Larrionda (Uru)
Once Caldas 2-1 on agg
Once Caldas: Henao - Rojas, Vanegas (Ortegon 32), Catano, Garcia, Velasquez, Viafara, Soto, Valentierra, Alcazar (Agudelo 66), Moreno (Araujo 61).
Sao Paulo: Rogerio - Cicinho, Fabao, Rodrigo, Alexandre, Grafite, Fabio Simplicio (Gabriel 73), Luis Fabiano, Marquinhos (Fabio Santos 30), Gustavo Nery (Velber 88), Danilo.

June 17 - Buenos Aires
River Plate 2 (Gonzalez 61, Nasuti 90)
Boca Juniors 1 (Tevez 89)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Baldassi (Arg)
Agg 2-2. Boca 5-4 on pens
River: Lux - Nasuti, Ameli (Fernandez 65), Rojas, Coudet (Sambueza 46), Husain, Mascherano (Salas 60), Gonzalez, Montenegro, Cavenaghi, Lopez. *Sent off: Sambueza 84min.*
Boca: Abbondanzieri - Schiavi, Rodriguez, Perea, Villarreal, Burdisso, Barros Schelotto (Alvarez 89), Cagna (Cangele 88), Tevez, Ledesma, Vargas. *Sent off: Vargas 46min.*

Final, 1st leg

June 23 - Buenos Aires
Boca Juniors 0
Once Caldas 0
Ref: Mendez (Uru)
Boca: Abbondanzieri - Alvarez, Schiavi, Burdisso, Rodriguez, Ledesma, Villarreal, Cagna (Cangele 76), Iarley, Barros Schelotto, Barijho.
Once Caldas: Henao - Rojas, Vanegas, Catano, Garcia, Viafara, Velasquez, Arango, Soto, Valentierra (Araujo 37; Ortegon 74), Agudelo (Alcazar 64).

Final, 2nd leg

July 1 - Manizales
Once Caldas 1 (Viafara 7)
Boca Juniors 1 (Burdisso 52)
HT: 1-0. **Ref:** Chandia (Chl)
Agg 1-1. Once Caldas 2-0 on pens
Once Caldas: Henao - Rojas, Catano, Vanegas, Garcia (Ortegon 90), Velasquez, Viafara, Valentierra, Soto, Moreno (Diaz 66), Alcazar (Agudelo 79).
Boca: Abbondanzieri - Perea, Schiavi, Burdisso, Rodriguez, Villarreal, Cascini, Vargas, Cagna (Caneo 86), Cangele, Tevez.

ARGENTINA

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Friday, June 11

Independiente 0
Talleres Cordoba 2 (Osorio 5, Donnet 81)

Saturday, June 12

Colon Santa Fe 1 (Blanco 55)
Velez Sarsfield 2 (R Zarate 71, M Zarate 80)

Quilmes 3 (Alayes 2, 46, Ceballos 76)
Racing Club 0

Sunday, June 13

Arsenal 2 (Gomez 57, Vilallonga 88)
Chacarita Juniors 2 (Moreno 43, Pena pen 65)

Banfield 3 (Amato 26, Sanguinetti 53, Sanchez pen 55)
Gimnasia LP 1 (Goux 42)

Estudiantes 1 (Colotto 90)
Nueva Chicago 1 (Tilger 34)

Newell's Old Boys 0
Atletico Rafaela 1 (Barrientos 86)

Olimpo 2 (Laspada 65, Galvan 77)
Boca Juniors 2 (Iarley 19, 55)

River Plate 2 (Sand 25, Toranzo 72)
Lanus 1 (Andrizzi 51)

San Lorenzo 0
Rosario Central 0

Friday, June 18

Racing Club 0
Arsenal 1 (Calderon 53)

Rosario Central 1 (Vitti 53)
Gimnasia LP 1 (Choy 83)

Saturday, June 19

Atletico Rafaela 2 (Caballero og 5, Barrientos 8)
Independiente 1 (Gimenez 11)

Estudiantes 0
Banfield 2 (Bilos 21, Palacio 36)

Nueva Chicago 0
Newell's Old Boys 2 (Re 27, Rosales 35)

Sunday, June 20

Boca Juniors 0
Colon Santa Fe 0

Chacarita Juniors 1 (Graf 37)
Olimpo 2 (Bujan 39, Medina pen 76)

Lanus 0
Quilmes 0

Talleres Cordoba 3 (Tula og 11, Piriz Alvez 20, Osorio 33)
River Plate 2 (Salas 71, Lopez 89)

Velez Sarsfield 2 (Valdemarin 16, 69)
San Lorenzo 0

Saturday, June 26

Independiente 2 (Abraham 4, Carboni 85)
Nueva Chicago 1 (Carranza 81)

Newell's Old Boys 0
Estudiantes 0

Sunday, June 27

Arsenal 2 (Quinteros 25, Di Alessio 71)
Lanus 0

Banfield 1 (Ojeda og 55)
Rosario Central 1 (Herrera 89)

Colon Santa Fe 1 (Fuertes 42)
Chacarita Juniors 2 (Piersimone 49, Graf 60)

Gimnasia LP 1 (Olveira pen 45)
Velez Sarsfield 0

Olimpo 1 (Delorte 26)
Racing Club 1 (Fernandez 45)

Quilmes 0
Talleres Cordoba 0

River Plate 1 (Gallardo 42)
Atletico Rafaela 1 (Juarez pen 71)

San Lorenzo 1 (Zabaleta 22)
Boca Juniors 0

ARGENTINA - CLOSING - FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
River Plate	19	12	4	3	41	21	40
Boca Juniors	19	10	6	3	34	17	36
Talleres Cordoba	19	10	5	4	30	19	35
Banfield	19	9	5	5	27	17	32
Velez Sarsfield	19	9	4	6	31	21	31
Quilmes	19	7	8	4	21	16	29
Arsenal	19	7	8	4	21	22	29
Racing Club	19	8	4	7	29	29	28
San Lorenzo	19	6	8	5	18	16	26
Atletico Rafaela	19	7	5	7	25	24	26
Colon Santa Fe	19	7	4	8	20	26	25
Newell's OB	19	4	10	5	28	25	22
Independiente	19	5	7	7	21	27	22
Estudiantes	19	5	6	8	19	29	21
Lanus	19	5	5	9	21	27	20
Olimpo	19	4	7	8	18	28	19
Gimnasia LP	19	3	8	8	21	26	17
Nueva Chicago	19	2	11	6	18	27	17
Chacarita Jnrs	19	3	8	8	21	34	17
Rosario Central	19	2	7	10	16	29	13

TOP GOALSCORERS
13 Rolando Zarate (Velez Sarsfield)
11 Aldo Osorio (Talleres Cordoba)

BOLIVIA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 6: Oriente 4 Blooming 2.
June 9: Aurora 1 San Jose 1; Iberoamericana 2 La Paz 3; Santa Cruz 1 Jorge Wilstermann 0; The Strongest 1 Oriente 2.
June 10: Blooming 5 Union Central 2; Real Potosi 0 Bolivar 1.
June 12: La Paz 0 Aurora 0; Jorge Wilstermann 1 Iberoamericana 0.
June 13: Blooming 2 Real Potosi 1; Bolivar 4 Santa Cruz 0; San Jose 1 The Strongest 1; Union Central 2 Oriente 1.
June 16: Santa Cruz 3 Blooming 1; The Strongest 0 La Paz 2; Real Potosi 1 Union Central 1; Aurora 1 Jorge Wilstermann 0.
June 17: Oriente 4 San Jose 0; Iberoamericana 2 Bolivar 3.
June 20: Blooming 0 Iberoamericana 0; Bolivar 2 Aurora 0; Real Potosi 3 Santa Cruz 0; Union Central 0 San Jose 0; Jorge Wilstermann 3 The Strongest 2.
June 21: La Paz 2 Oriente 0.
June 23: Iberoamericana 1 Real Potosi 2.
June 24: Aurora 5 Blooming 1; Oriente 2 Jorge Wilstermann 2; Santa Cruz 0 Union Central 1; San Jose 3 La Paz 2; The Strongest 3 Bolivar 0.

BOLIVIA - OPENING - FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bolivar	22	17	2	3	51	21	53
Aurora	22	11	5	6	42	32	38
J Wilstermann	22	11	3	8	40	28	36
Real Potosi	22	10	3	9	43	38	33
San Jose	22	9	5	8	35	36	32
Oriente	22	8	7	7	43	38	31
La Paz	22	9	4	9	33	38	31
Union Central	22	8	6	8	27	29	30
Santa Cruz	22	7	5	10	28	40	26
The Strongest	22	7	3	12	31	31	24
Blooming	22	5	4	13	28	52	19
Iberoamericana	22	5	3	14	23	41	18

BRAZIL

June 12: Internacional 4 Atletico Mineiro 1; Sao Paulo 3 Gremio 2; Parana 1 Botafogo 1; Fluminense 1 Guarani 1.
June 13: Criciuma 2 Juventude 0; Flamengo 3 Atletico Paranaense 0; Vitoria 1 Santos 2; Goias 1 Corinthians 1; Ponte Preta 0 Figueirense 2; Cruzeiro 1 Paysandu 0; Coritiba 1 Sao Caetano 0; Palmeiras 2 Vasco da Gama 2.
June 19: Vasco da Gama 0 Parana 0; Figueirense 0 Cruzeiro 0; Gremio 1 Coritiba 1; Atletico Paranaense 1 Vitoria 3.
June 20: Botafogo 0 Ponte Preta 1; Paysandu 1 Sao Paulo 0; Sao Caetano 1 Palmeiras 1; Guarani 2 Criciuma 1; Atletico Mineiro 2 Fluminense 1; Santos 3 Internacional 0; Corinthians 1 Flamengo 1; Juventude 1 Goias 1.
June 24: Sao Caetano 1 Juventude 0.
June 26: Flamengo 0 Figueirense 3; Santos 2 Guarani 1; Coritiba 1 Parana 1; Criciuma 1 Gremio 2.
June 27: Internacional 1 Vasco da Gama 3; Botafogo 3 Fluminense 3; Paysandu 4 Vitoria 2; Goias 3 Sao Caetano 2; Ponte Preta 1 Cruzeiro 0; Atletico Mineiro 0 Atletico Paranaense 1; Palmeiras 2 Sao Paulo 1; Juventude 1 Corinthians 0.
July 3: Sao Paulo 2 Ponte Preta 0; Atletico Paranaense 4 Juventude 1; Fluminense 2 Gremio 0; Internacional 3 Criciuma 0; Figueirense 2 Vasco da Gama 2; Vitoria 0 Goias 0; Guarani 1 Atletico Mineiro 1.
July 4: Sao Caetano 1 Botafogo 2; Parana 1 Palmeiras 2; Corinthians 2 Santos 3; Flamengo 4 Paysandu 1; Cruzeiro 0 Coritiba 3.

BRAZIL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Palmeiras	12	6	4	2	23	10	22
Figueirense	12	6	4	2	17	9	22
Sao Paulo	12	6	3	3	18	14	21
At Paranaense	12	6	2	4	19	13	20
Internacional	12	6	2	4	15	12	20
Ponte Preta	12	6	2	4	10	11	20
Santos	12	6	1	5	21	21	19
Sao Caetano	12	5	3	4	18	13	18
Criciuma	12	5	3	4	19	18	18
Cruzeiro	12	5	3	4	15	17	18
Fluminense	12	4	6	2	16	13	18
Vitoria	12	5	2	5	24	17	17
Goias	12	4	5	3	20	19	17
Juventude	12	4	3	5	14	14	15
Coritiba	12	3	6	3	11	10	15
Vasco da Gama	12	3	5	4	17	14	14
Gremio	12	3	5	4	17	18	14
Guarani	12	3	4	5	10	13	13
Parana	12	3	4	5	13	21	13
At Mineiro	12	2	7	3	15	18	13
Flamengo	12	2	5	5	15	19	11
Corinthians	12	2	4	6	12	26	10
Paysandu	12	2	3	7	15	24	9
Botafogo	12	1	6	5	14	24	9

CHILE

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Play-offs

Best of two ties; aggregate score irrelevant. If level at one tie each, 2nd leg goes to extra-time – team scoring golden goal qualifies

Quarter-finals

1st legs
June 7: U de Chile 1 U de Concepcion 0.
June 8: Union Espanola 2 Santiago Wanderers 1; Dep Temuco 1 Cobreloa 1.
June 9: Huachipato 1 Colo Colo 1.

2nd legs
June 12: Santiago Wanderers 2 Union Espanola 0 (aet; Wanderers 3-1 on pens); U de Concepcion 2 Universidad de Chile 1 (aet; U de Chile on golden goal).
June 13: Colo Colo 0 Huachipato 1; Cobreloa 3 Deportes Temuco 1.

Semi-finals

1st legs
June 17: Huachipato 2 Cobreloa 2; U de Chile 1 Santiago Wanderers 1.

2nd legs
June 19: Cobreloa 3 Huachipato 2 (aet).
June 20: Santiago Wanderers 0 U de Chile 2.

Final

1st leg - June 23 - Nacional stadium, Santiago
U de Chile 0
Cobreloa 0
Att: 40,000. **Ref:** Selman

2nd leg - June 27 - Municipal stadium, Calama
Cobreloa 1 (Fuentes 35)
U de Chile 1 (E Gonzalez og 52)
Aet. **HT:** 1-0. **90mins:** 1-1. **Att:** 18,000.
Ref: Chandia
U de Chile 4-2 on pens

COLOMBIA

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

Play-offs

June 5: Dep Cali 3 Once Caldas 1.
June 9: Dep Pasto 4 America 0; At Junior 0 At Nacional 4; Indep Medellin 1 Chico 2.
June 13: Once Caldas 2 Dep Cali 0; At Nacional 1 At Junior 1; America 2 Dep Pasto 0; Chico 3 Indep Medellin 2.
June 16: At Nacional 1 Dep Pasto 2; At Junior 0 America 1; Once Caldas 0 Indep Medellin 2; Dep Cali 2 Chico 2.
June 20: America 0 Nacional 1; Indep Medellin 3 Dep Cali 3; Dep Pasto 0 At Junior 1; Chico 2 Once Caldas 3.

OPENING PLAY-OFFS - GP A - FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
At Nacional	6	3	1	2	12	8	10
Dep Pasto	6	3	1	2	9	6	10
America	6	2	1	3	7	10	7
At Junior	6	1	3	2	4	8	6

OPENING PLAY-OFFS - GP B - FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Indep Medellin	6	3	1	2	15	8	10
Once Caldas	6	3	0	3	7	11	9
Dep Cali	6	2	2	2	9	11	8
Chico	6	2	1	3	9	10	7

Group winners qualified for championship Final

Final

1st leg - June 24
Indep Medellin 2 (Serna 57, Castillo 88)
At Nacional 1 (Perea 72)
HT: 0-0

2nd leg - June 27
At Nacional 0
Indep Medellin 0

Indep Medellin won opening championship

ECUADOR

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 11: Dep Cuenca 3 Espoli 2.
June 12: Dep Quito 3 Olmedo 1.
June 13: Aucas 1 LDU Quito 1; Macara 2 Emelec 2; Barcelona 2 El Nacional 0.
June 19: El Nacional 0 Dep Cuenca 1; Emelec 1 Dep Quito 1; Olmedo 2 Aucas 2.
June 20: Espoli 0 Macara 0; LDU Quito 2 Barcelona 1.
June 23: Aucas 1 Dep Quito 1; Espoli 0 El Nacional 2; Barcelona 3 Olmedo 2; Macara 1 LDU Quito 0; Dep Cuenca 2 Emelec 2.
June 27: El Nacional 1 Aucas 0; LDU Quito 2 Dep Cuenca 3; Dep Quito 3 Barcelona 3; Olmedo 2 Macara 0; Emelec 1 Espoli 1.

ECUADOR - CLOSING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Dep Cuenca	4	3	1	0	9	6	10
Barcelona	4	2	1	1	9	7	7
Dep Quito	4	1	3	0	8	6	6
El Nacional	4	2	0	2	3	3	6
Macara	4	1	2	1	3	4	5
Emelec	4	0	4	0	6	6	4
Olmedo	4	1	1	2	7	8	4
LDU Quito	4	1	1	2	5	6	4
Aucas	4	0	3	1	4	5	3
Espoli	4	0	2	2	3	6	2

PARAGUAY

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 9: Nacional 1 Sportivo Luqueno 1; Sport Colombia 2 Olimpia 0; Tacuary 0 Sol de America 1; 12 de Octubre 1 Cerro Porteno 4; Libertad 3 Guarani 0.
June 13: Guarani 2 Sport Colombia 1; Sportivo Luqueno 1 Libertad 1; Cerro Porteno 2 Nacional 1.
June 14: Sol de America 1 12 de Octubre 0; Olimpia 0 Tacuary 1.
June 19: Tacuary 0 Guarani 1.
June 20: Nacional 2 Libertad 1; Cerro Porteno 3 Sol de America 0; 12 de Octubre 1 Olimpia 0; Sport Colombia 3 Sportivo Luqueno 1.
June 26: Libertad 3 Sport Colombia 0; Sol de America 1 Nacional 0.
June 27: Guarani 2 12 de Octubre 1; Sportivo Luqueno 0 Tacuary 0; Olimpia 1 Cerro Porteno 1.

PARAGUAY - OPENING - FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Cerro Porteno	18	12	5	1	31	13	41
Libertad	18	11	5	2	44	13	38
Tacuary	18	8	4	6	25	13	28
Guarani	18	8	4	6	20	25	28
Olimpia	18	6	5	7	21	28	23
Nacional	18	5	5	8	19	24	20
Sol de America	18	5	4	9	14	24	19
12 de Octubre	18	5	3	10	18	28	18
Sportivo Luqueno	18	3	8	7	19	30	17
Sport Colombia	18	4	3	11	21	34	15

PERU

OPENING CHAMPIONSHIP

June 9: Universidad SMP 1 Cienciano 1; Estudiantes 2 Universidad CV 1; Dep Wanka 3 Alianza Atletico 1; Union Huaral 4 At Universidad 0; Melgar 4 Alianza Lima 0; Sporting Cristal 1 Coronel Bolognesi 1; Universitario 1 Sport Boys 0.
June 12: Coronel Bolognesi 3 Estudiantes 0; Sporting Cristal 1 Deportivo Wanka 2.
June 13: Alianza Atletico 2 Universidad SMP 1; Cienciano 4 Melgar 0; Universidad CV 0 Sport Boys 2; At Universidad 1 Universitario 1; Alianza Lima 2 Union Huaral 1.
June 16: Estudiantes 0 Alianza Atletico 1; Melgar 2 Sporting Cristal 1; Union Huaral 1 Coronel Bolognesi 0; Sport Boys 1 Cienciano 2; Dep Wanka 0 Alianza Lima 1; Universidad SMP 2 At Universidad 4; Universitario 0 Universidad CV 0.
June 19: Coronel Bolognesi 1 Universitario 0; Dep Wanka 1 Union Huaral 1; Alianza Lima 2 Universidad SMP 0.
June 20: Sporting Cristal 4 Estudiantes 0; Alianza Atletico 2 Sport Boys 0; Universidad CV 1 Melgar 1; Atletico Universidad 2 Cienciano 3.

PERU - OPENING

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Alianza Lima	22	16	4	2	44	15	52
Cienciano	22	15	2	5	42	22	47
Alianza Atletico	22	12	5	5	38	23	41
Sporting Cristal	22	11	4	7	41	21	37
Universitario	22	10	7	5	25	18	37
Universidad CV	22	9	6	7	21	26	33
Union Huaral	22	8	5	9	27	26	29
Coronel Bolognesi	22	8	3	11	33	35	27
Melgar	22	7	6	9	28	35	27
Estudiantes	22	6	8	8	18	30	26
Dep Wanka	22	5	7	10	21	37	22
Sport Boys	22	5	6	11	24	33	21
At Universidad	22	4	7	11	24	39	19
Universidad SMP	22	1	4	17	18	44	7

URUGUAY

CLASSIFICATION STAGE

June 9: Nacional 3 Dep Colonia 2.
June 11: Fenix 2 Defensor 0.
June 12: Tacuarembo 2 Central Espanol 2; Miramar Misiones 1 Dep Colonia 1; Dep Maldonado 0 Danubio 2.
June 13: Penarol 0 Nacional 0; Cerro 1 Cerrito 3; Liverpool 1 Rentistas 2; Rocha 2 Plaza 4; Bella Vista M 0 Wanderers 2.
June 19: Rocha 2 Nacional 2; Rentistas 1 Dep Colonia 1; Defensor 1 Miramar Misiones 1.
June 20: Penarol 2 Fenix 1; Cerro 1 Wanderers 0; Tacuarembo 2 Bella Vista M 3; Cerrito 0 Liverpool 2; Dep Maldonado 1 Central Espanol 1; Plaza 0 Danubio 0.
June 22: Miramar Misiones 2 Nacional 4.
June 23: Fenix 1 Dep Maldonado 1; Bella Vista M 1 Cerro 2; Rocha 1 Tacuarembo 1; Dep Colonia 0 Cerrito 1; Liverpool 1 Central Espanol 0; Danubio 0 Rentistas 0; Penarol 4 Plaza 4; Wanderers 1 Defensor 5.

URUGUAY - CLASSIFICATION STAGE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Danubio	16	12	4	0	32	11	40
Cerrito	16	10	2	4	25	17	32
Penarol	16	9	4	3	33	16	31
Nacional	16	8	5	3	24	12	29
Liverpool	16	7	5	4	21	17	26
Fenix	16	6	6	4	26	19	24
Rentistas	16	6	6	4	22	17	24
Wanderers	16	7	3	6	15	18	24
Cerro	16	7	1	8	21	25	22
Defensor	16	4	7	5	20	23	19
Miramar Misiones	16	4	6	6	23	25	18
Dep Colonia	16	3	8	5	18	23	17
Bella Vista M	16	4	4	8	14	24	16
Rocha	16	3	7	6	21	32	16
Plaza	16	2	9	5	27	31	15
Tacuarembo	16	3	3	10	17	27	12
Central Espanol	16	2	5	9	13	24	11
Dep Maldonado	16	1	7	8	12	23	10

CENTRAL & NORTH AMERICA

MEXICO

CLOSING CHAMPIONSHIP

Semi-finals

1st legs
June 2: Toluca 1 Guadalajara 0.
June 3: Cruz Azul 0 Pumas UNAM 0.

2nd legs
June 5: Guadalajara 2 Toluca 0
Guadalajara 2-1 on agg.
June 6: Pumas UNAM 3 Cruz Azul 2
Pumas 3-2 on agg.

Final

1st leg - June 10
Guadalajara 1 (Morales pen 86)
Pumas UNAM 1 (Lopez 76)
HT: 0-0. **Ref:** Glower

2nd leg - June 13
Pumas UNAM 0
Guadalajara 0
Ref: Alcala
Agg 1-1. Pumas 5-4 on pens

UNITED STATES

June 5: Chicago Fire 3 DC United 0; Los Angeles Galaxy 1 Kansas City Wizards 2; MetroStars 0 Dallas Burn 2.
June 6: New England Revolution 1 Columbus Crew 2.
June 9: Colorado Rapids 0 Kansas City Wizards 1.
June 12: Columbus Crew 2 Kansas City Wizards 2; DC United 0 Colorado Rapids 0; Dallas Burn 3 New England Revolution 1; Los Angeles Galaxy 3 Chicago Fire 2; San Jose Earthquakes 3 MetroStars 1.
June 19: Chicago Fire 1 San Jose Earthquakes 1; Colorado Rapids 1 Dallas Burn 1; DC United 3 Columbus Crew 1; New England Revolution 1 Kansas City Wizards 3; MetroStars 2 Los Angeles Galaxy 1.
June 23: Los Angeles Galaxy 0 MetroStars 3.
June 26: Columbus Crew 1 Colorado Rapids 2; Dallas Burn 1 DC United 1; New England Revolution 2 MetroStars 1; San Jose Earthquakes 1 Kansas City Wizards 1.
June 27: Chicago Fire 0 Los Angeles Galaxy 1.
June 30: MetroStars 2 Colorado Rapids 3.
July 3: Columbus Crew 2 Chicago Fire 0; DC United 6 MetroStars 2; Kansas City Wizards 5 Dallas Burn 1.
July 4: Colorado Rapids 1 New England Revolution 0; Los Angeles Galaxy 2 San Jose Earthquakes 1.

USA - EASTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
DC United	15	5	5	5	22	21	20
MetroStars	15	5	4	6	26	31	19
Columbus Crew	13	5	3	5	15	16	18
Chicago Fire	14	4	5	5	15	15	17
New England	14	3	3	8	15	23	12

USA - WESTERN CONFERENCE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
LA Galaxy	16	8	3	5	30	25	27
Kansas City	15	7	4	4	23	14	25
Colorado Rapids	14	5	6	3	13	12	21
San Jose	13	4	5	4	22	19	17
Dallas Burn	13	4	4	5	15	20	16

LEADING GOALSCORER
8 Carlos Ruiz (Los Angeles Galaxy)

ASIA

JAPAN

FIRST STAGE

June 12: FC Tokyo 2 Gamba Osaka 1; Jubilo Iwata 3 JEF United Ichihara 2; Nagoya Grampus Eight 3 Urawa Reds 0; Vissel Kobe 0 Yokohama F Marinos 2; Kashiwa Reysol 0 Shimizu S-Pulse 0; Oita Trinita 0 Albirex Niigata 1.
June 13: Cerezo Osaka 2 Tokyo Verdy 1969 2; Sanfrecce Hiroshima 0 Kashima Antlers 2.
June 16: Urawa Reds 1 Kashiwa Reysol 1; JEF United Ichihara 2 FC Tokyo 2; Tokyo Verdy 1969 3 Kashima Antlers 0; Yokohama F Marinos 2 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 0; Albirex Niigata 3 Shimizu S-Pulse 3; Jubilo Iwata 2 Vissel Kobe 2; Nagoya Grampus Eight 2 Oita Trinita 1; Cerezo Osaka 0 Gamba Osaka 1.
June 19: Kashima Antlers 1 Jubilo Iwata 0; Shimizu S-Pulse 3 Tokyo Verdy 1969 1; Vissel Kobe 2 Cerezo Osaka 2; Sanfrecce Hiroshima 1 Albirex Niigata 1; Kashiwa Reysol 1 Yokohama F Marinos 2; FC Tokyo 3 Nagoya Grampus Eight 2.
June 20: Gamba Osaka 3 Urawa Reds 2; Oita Trinita 2 JEF United Ichihara 3.
June 26: Urawa Reds 2 FC Tokyo 1; JEF United Ichihara 1 Shimizu S-Pulse 1; Tokyo Verdy 1969 3 Oita Trinita 1; Yokohama F Marinos 1 Kashima Antlers 0; Albirex Niigata 1 Gamba Osaka 4; Jubilo Iwata 4 Sanfrecce Hiroshima 2; Nagoya Grampus Eight 2 Vissel Kobe 2; Cerezo Osaka 1 Kashiwa Reysol 5.

JAPAN - FIRST STAGE - FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Yokohama FM	15	11	3	1	26	13	36
Jubilo Iwata	15	11	1	3	31	16	34
Urawa Reds	15	7	4	4	30	24	25
Gamba Osaka	15	7	3	5	31	23	24
Kashima Antlers	15	7	3	5	18	14	24
FC Tokyo	15	6	5	4	19	19	23
JEF United	15	5	7	3	28	23	22
Grampus Eight	15	5	5	5	24	22	20
Tokyo Verdy	15	5	4	6	21	23	19
Oita Trinita	15	5	2	8	21	27	17
Shimizu S-Pulse	15	3	7	5	20	27	16
Vissel Kobe	15	3	6	6	21	25	15
Sanfrecce H	15	3	6	6	15	19	15
Albirex Niigata	15	3	5	7	16	25	14
Kashiwa Reysol	15	3	3	9	14	22	12
Cerezo Osaka	15	2	4	9	17	30	10

SOUTH KOREA

FIRST STAGE

June 13: Incheon 1 Daejeon 0; Daegu 1 Busan 0; Songnam 2 Seoul 1; Pohang 1 Bucheon 1; Chonbuk 2 Chunnam 1; Suwon 3 Gwangju 2.
June 20: Daejeon 1 Suwon 0; Gwangju 1 Chonbuk 0; Chunnam 2 Pohang 2; Bucheon 1 Songnam 1; Seoul 1 Daegu 1; Busan 0 Ulsan 0.
June 27: Ulsan 2 Seoul 1; Daegu 1 Bucheon 2; Songnam 1 Chunnam 0; Pohang 1 Gwangju 1; Chonbuk 1 Daejeon 1; Suwon 3 Incheon 2.

SOUTH KOREA - FIRST STAGE - FINAL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Pohang	12	6	5	1	16	12	23
Chonbuk	12	5	5	2	16	9	20
Ulsan	12	5	5	2	11	8	20
Suwon	12	5	3	4	19	16	18
Seoul	12	3	7	2	12	10	16
Chunnam	12	3	6	3	17	13	15
Gwangju	12	3	6	3	11	12	15
Songnam	12	4	3	5	13	16	15
Busan	12	2	8	2	7	8	14
Daegu	12	3	3	6	19	19	12
Daejeon	12	2	6	4	9	11	12
Bucheon	12	1	8	3	7	12	11
Incheon	12	2	3	7	9	20	9

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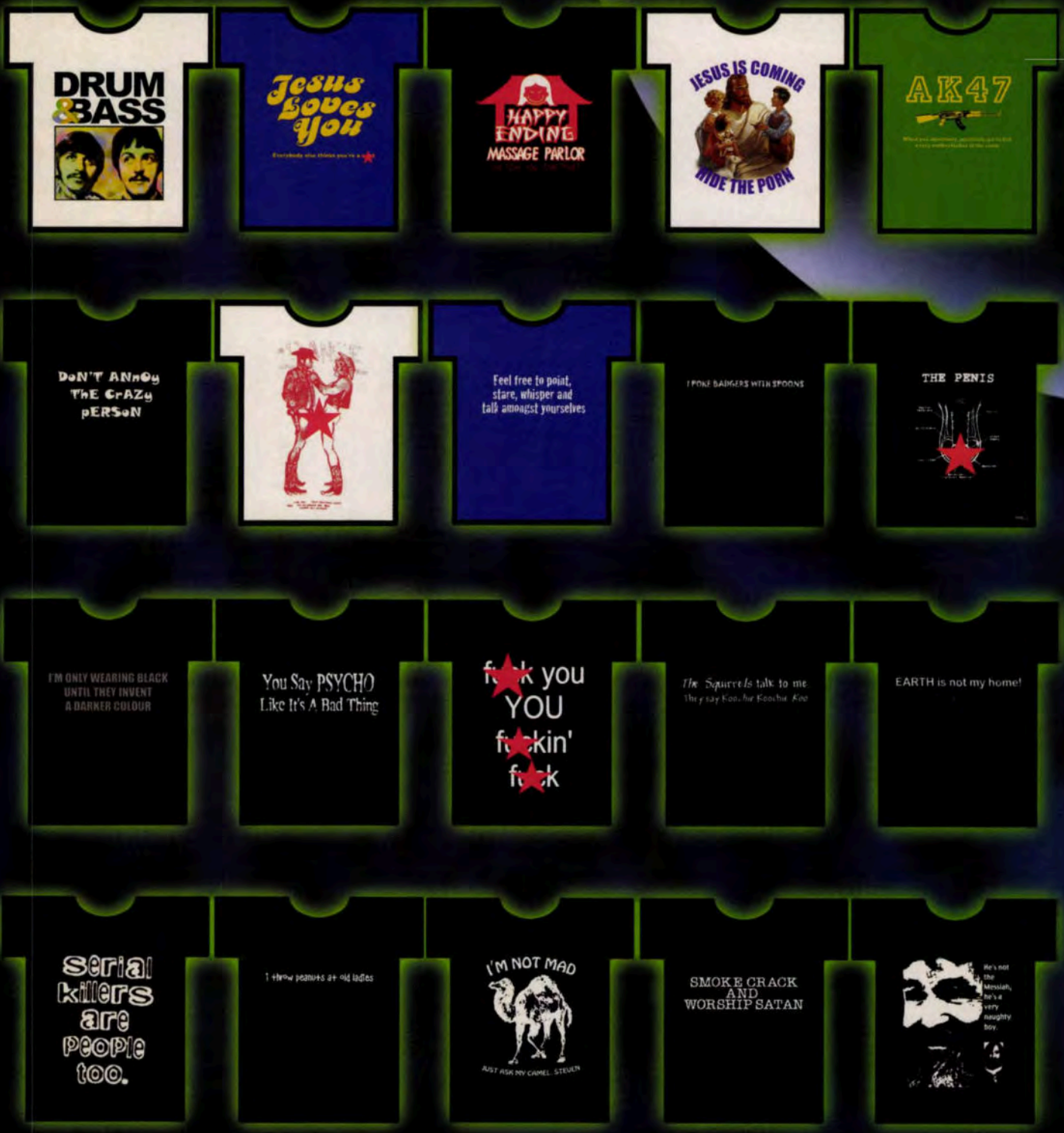

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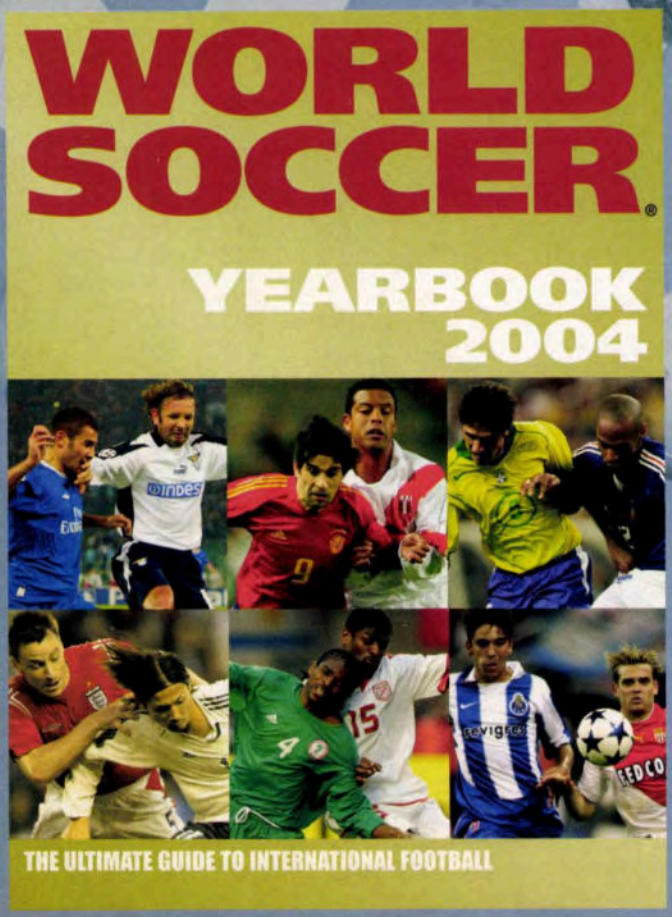

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